Backstreets

The Boss Magazine

#75 FALL 2002

US $5.95
CAN $7.95

Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band one-night-stand their way across America

Barnstorming begins: U.S. Tour, Leg One • Album reviews • Behind the Songs • The G.A. Blues • The 2002 TV Tour

COME ON UP: THE RISING SPECIAL ISSUE

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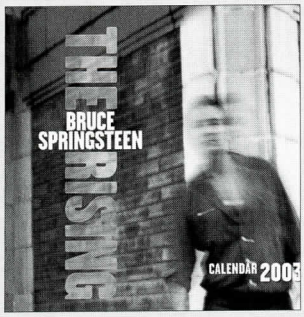
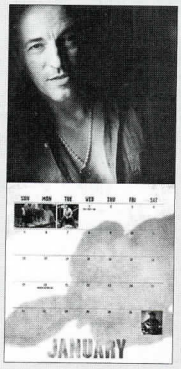
2003 Calendars and more from Backstreet Records



OFFICIAL 2003 SPRINGSTEEN CALENDAR

As sold on tour, the official *The Rising* calendar for 2003! Features dramatic photo portraits of Bruce as well as members of the E Street Band, a great month-by-month wall calendar. Unlike some from years past, this Bruce-licensed 2003 model is better looking and very useful, with space to write for each date (dates and venues are even listed for *The Rising* tour). Get 'em while they last, a perfect holiday gift for your favorite Boss fan!.....$16



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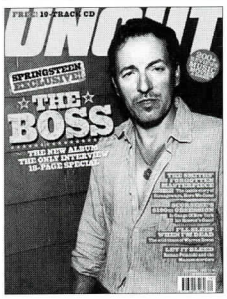
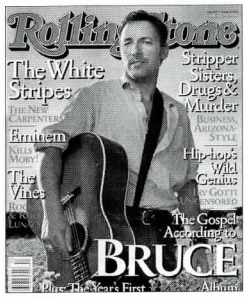
- see page 5 for more official concert shirts! -



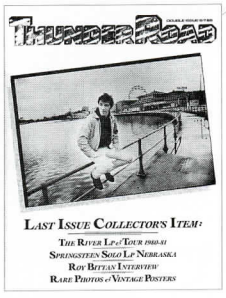


UNCUT MAGAZINE / SEPT. 2002

Imported from the UK, Uncut magazine features the most in-depth Rising interview with Bruce by far: an 18 page must-read Springsteen cover feature. (Note: This item also includes a bonus various-artists CD that comes with each issue of *Uncut*—a nice treat—but no Bruce songs on the CD.).....$12

ROLLING STONE MAGAZINE #903

A great seven-page cover story and interview, "Bruce Springsteen's American Gospel," by Mark Binelli. Also includes Kurt Loder's five-star review.....$6



THUNDER ROAD MAGAZINE FINAL ISSUE #6/7

The first Springsteen fanzine, *Thunder Road,* stopped publishing in the early '80s after only a handful of issues, but they were an inspiration to *Backstreets* and remain great collectibles and great reads, too. This double issue was the magazine's swan song and probably its best. *Thunder Road* #6/7 is a huge 64-page issue packed with solid writing and beautiful photos. We've got the very last stack of these and are offering them at a low price, but when they're gone, that's it. Especially at this price, it's a must-have.....$10

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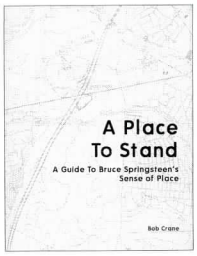
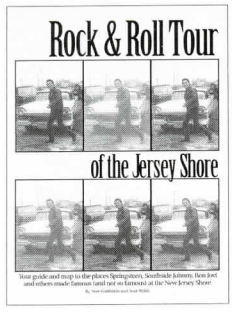


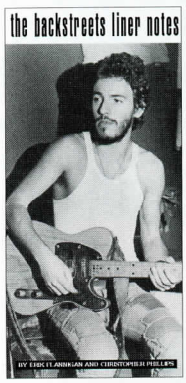
A PLACE TO STAND: A GUIDE TO BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN'S SENSE OF PLACE

By Bob Crane. Youngstown... Balboa Park... Greasy Lake... the road to Basra... It's all in *A Place to Stand.* This fantastically detailed book runs down every real-world landmark—street, highway, small town, big city, river, you name it—in Bruce's songs, from Jersey across the US and around the world. *Backstreets* contributor and two-time Trivia Quiz champ Bob Crane put his award-winning knowledge (and research skills) to use, and really outdid himself with this one. A fun read and a great resource. Self-published by Palace Books, sales of "A Place to Stand" help benefit Save Tillie. 102 pages, softcover.....$15



ROCK & ROLL TOUR OF THE JERSEY SHORE

By Stan Goldstein and Jean Mikle. Another fan publication, this tour guide is highly recommended for anyone who's ever wondered what sights to see when they make that pilgrimage to Springsteen's Jersey Shore. With details and photos of Bruce-related historical sites, clubs, streetcorners and other landmarks in Asbury, Freehold, Red Bank, and beyond. All well-annotated with maps, addresses, and loads of history. Stan and Jean are lifelong NJ residents who have given walking tours of Springsteen sites to thousands of fans. 64 pages, softcover.....$20



BACKSTREETS LINER NOTES FOR *TRACKS*

Originally included as a supplemental booklet with issue #61 of *Backstreets* magazine. That issue is sold out, but we still have the coolest part: this 12-page bonus booklet, a song-by-song look at the entire *Tracks* box set, providing background details for all 66 songs. The coolest part: it's designed, bound and sized to fit the pocket of the box. A must!.....$5

SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY AND THE ASBURY JUKES: GOING TO JUKESVILLE CD

The new album from Southside is out now, and available from Backstreet Records! Southside gets back to basics on 14 new songs with the Jukes, including Lisa Lowell and Soozie Tyrell on background vocals.....$15

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Five issues of the catalog for $5 in the US and Canada, $8 overseas. Also check out www.backstreets.com/catalog.html for new items as they arrive!

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BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
July, 2002, New Jersey
Ida Mae Astute/ABC Photo

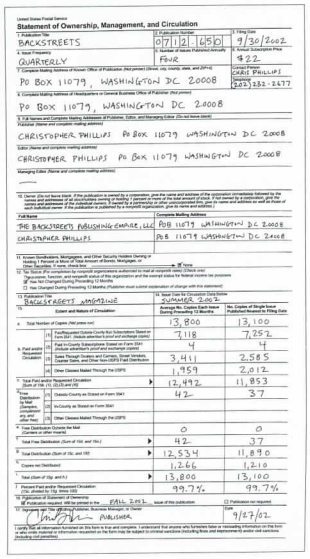
BACKSTREETS STAFF

Publisher & Editor
Christopher Phillips

Assistant Editor
Andrew E. Massimino

Associate Editors
Charles R. Cross
Erik Flannigan
Jonathan B. Pont
Robert Santelli

Contributors
Robert Bader, Rich Breton, Curtis Cleland, Bob Crane, René van Diemen, David DuBois, Lynn Elder, Lisa Iannucci, Josh Jacobson, Phil and Steve Jump, Paul Kaytes, John Kelly, Magnus Lauglo, Ken Lesnik, Flynn McLean, Bob Makin, Fred Mills, Jon Phillips, P. Jay Plutzer, Maggie Powell, Jim Ragsdale, Bernie Ranellone, Debra L. Rothenberg, James Shive, Billy Smith, Mark Stricherz, Mark Sullivan, Stacie Tobin, Salvador Trepat, Bob Zimmerman, and many others whose help is essential.



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Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address): —		
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LETTERS

A MONUMENTAL DRIVE

Dear Editor:

I've lived in Washington D.C. since 1994, and I heard "The Rising" for the first time on 94.7. I was aware that [longtime D.C. DJ] Cerphe would play the "new" track tonight in the six o'clock hour. I guessed he would play it at the top of the hour, after the news/weather/commercials. I guessed right.

I pulled out of the parking garage by the White House (no, I don't work for the government, just by them). By the time I made it down toward Constitution, Cerphe was talking about it. Right as I could see the Washington Monument, the song started. I drove past the Lincoln Memorial just as the first set of "Ii"s kicked in. I went across the bridge and saw the gates of Arlington National Cemetery as Bruce sang the verse about Mary. And as the last chorus thumped in, I drove past the Pentagon, where they are still rebuilding the wall where the plane crashed. I had to pull over. I was in tears. I do not cry; it's not a manly thing with me, I just tend not to cry. But somehow all the emotion had piled up and just went out. It was amazingly cathartic for me. Just seeing the ghosts of men like Washington, Lincoln, all the people who died fighting Hitler, and then where the plane hit.... It was amazing.

The song really made me remember how I felt that day, and brought it all back. But there was redemption at the end: The DJ then played "Born to Run." And no matter how bad it gets, you can always feel a bit freer when that is blasting out your car stereo, with the windows down, and the traffic light enough that you can do at least 50.

That was the greatest Springsteen moment I have ever had. It was a revelation. I'm sure you all have your own.

Kevin Cherry
Washington, DC

FITTER, HAPPIER...

Dear Editor:

Well, I got my copy of *The Rising* this morning in suburban Boston (no midnight sales in the general vicinity). One of the best things about being a Bruce fan is the knowing glances and nods from other devotees. Walking to my car from the record store, I crossed paths with another guy, and we just held up the "limited edition" to each other and smiled. It's like, "yeah, I know"—further words are not needed.

I'll have to wait a few days before I fill in your online *Rising* poll. My mind is still reeling from the Trivia Quiz in the new issue. I feel like the mathematics professor who meets Dr. Stephen Hawking at a cocktail party and, after a few minutes of conversation, realizes he knows nothing about a subject he has studied for years. I have been humbled. My only solace is that Bruce himself would only get about half the questions right. My congratulations to the "test committee," and just this gentle bit of advice: You boys need to get out more.

Today's a pretty good day.

Larry Thompson
Boston, MA

JEFFREY SNYDER PHOTO

Relentless as the rain: New York City, August 29, 2002.

LAY DOWN YOUR MONEY

Dear Editor:

Anyone who subscribes to *Backstreets* has had experience in trying to get tickets for a Springsteen show: high prices, much demand. But did anyone check out the disparity between good seats in New York and good seats in Kentucky?

For $2,000, I can get a seat inside Madison Square Garden, close to the stage and see what may be the last great tour of Springsteen's career. Or, I can take a flight to Lexington, Kentucky, in first class, rent a limo, stay at a five-star hotel, eat like a king *and* see Bruce at the Rupp Arena from a prime seat. Did I mention that I would still have $800 left over?

Give me a break! If Springsteen's camp is so sophisticated in preventing his new album from being placed on mp3 files, then why don't they screw the New York scalpers and play a free show in Central Park? Maybe then the heroes of 9/11 would be able to enjoy the album that was written for them in the first place.

Jim Bennett
Huntington, NY

"GENERAL" COMPLAINTS

Dear Editor:

We went to the show in St. Louis, and of course as we all knew it would be, it was a wonderful evening of rock 'n' roll. There is truly nothing like Bruce Springsteen with the E Street Band. Since the mid-'70s, I've been to about 20 shows or so, and the boys (and I guess you have to add "girls" to that now) just keep getting better.

PUT A LID ON IT.

"THE BOSS MAGAZINE" BACKSTREETS CAP
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Now for the general admission. I hope that somehow, word can get to Bruce and/or his "people" that the concept just didn't work for the vast majority of people that we talked to. Let's face it—and so should Bruce—the bulk of his fan base are folks in their mid-30s to late-40s. After working all day long, spending a little over $170 for two tickets, my wife and I then had to get down to the venue as quick as we could, stand in line outside for a few hours, then stand around inside for two more hours while getting crowded towards the front, then stand up during the show for a total of about seven hours of standing up after working all day.

Everyone around us, both in line and in the show, did not like the setup. About the only people who did seem to like it were the people in the "pit," who could afford to put their everyday life on hold for a day and stand in line even longer. Us working folks, who so dearly love Bruce and who feel that his music speaks directly to us, need a break here. At least let us know the setup before we go to Ticketmaster and think we're getting floor "seats," when we're really just buying the right to stand up for an entire evening.

Other than that, I loved it and plan on going to Indianapolis in November for round two. I just won't do GA this time.

Bob Moggio
Glen Carbon, IL

WORKIN' OVERTIME

Dear Editor:

Just a quick note to say that you guys are doing an absolutely amazing job in the midst of all this. Every morning I wake up and check in at backstreets.com, and it seems like there's always an hour or more of new material, articles, links, etc., to page through. I shudder to imagine the overtime you must be putting in! I think it's sort of funny that you're like the E Streeters—in that you sort of get to chill out from time to time, but when Bruce decides he wants to play ball, you've got to step up to the plate immediately. Okay. Enough ass-kissing. You guys rock.

John Mayer
(not the Room for Squares guy)
Hollywood, CA

THE HOT ROCK

Dear Editor:

I went to go see the *second*-best band in the world (after Bruce and the E Street Band, of course), Sleater-Kinney, on September 19 in Los Angeles. They're a great indie band, a very important band in rock right now, and have remained true to themselves.

Anyway, I'm watching this great band come back onstage, after an exhausting show, for their encores. They say that they're going to do a cover, with drummer Janet Weiss on harmonica. They count off, the harmonica blasts away, and it sounds familiar. I'm trying to make out the words. Then I hear, "...working all day... (muffle)... driving all night chasin'..." Where have I heard this before? Then these three women *belt* out the chorus: "Mister I ain't a boy, no I'm a man, and I believe in the promised land!"

My two favorite bands in the world together spiritually! I was screaming to all my friends, telling them it's a Bruce song, dancing and singing all the lyrics. At the end of the song, lead singer Corin Tucker said, "That was a Bruce Springsteen song, just in case anyone didn't notice. By the way, there was one guy in the audience that knew all the words. That was pretty impressive."

What an unbelievable, magical night! It was like Batman and Superman joining forces.

Daniel Delgado
Oxnard, CA

SOMETHING'S BROKE

Dear Editor:

I think it's time for *Backstreets* to do an investigative report on Ticketmaster. After so many tours, so many hours of redialing and so many hours of camping out, I would like to know who gets all the tickets! Well, I know who gets a lot of the tickets: ticket brokers. After getting nothing myself on the day of the sale, I checked out some ticket brokers online and of course they had a seemingly endless supply of tickets. Is it an amazing coincidence that three different brokers had seats in about the same sections and rows, or could something be going on here?

Michelle Maiatico
New Market, MD

OFFICIAL SPRINGSTEEN CONCERT SHIRTS

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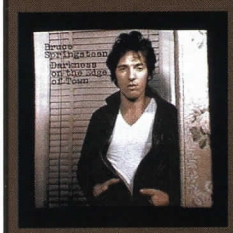
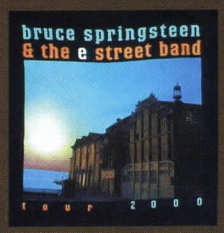
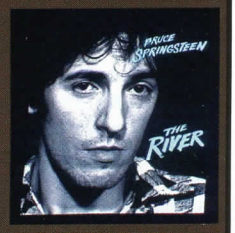
Just in from the new tour! Black shirt with album cover on front, song titles on back.
sizes: M, L, XL, XXL **$20**



DARKNESS T-SHIRT
Black shirt with album cover on front, song titles on back.
sizes: L, XL **$20**



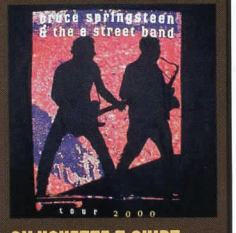
BOARDWALK T-SHIRT
Black shirt with Asbury Park image on front, tour dates on back.
sizes: L, XL **$20**



THE RIVER T-SHIRT
Black shirt with album cover on front, song titles on back.
sizes: L, XL **$20**

TRACKS T-SHIRT
White shirt with front-only design: four *Tracks* CD covers, in color, "Bruce Springsteen."
sizes: L, XL **$20**

BORN IN THE U.S.A. T-SHIRT
White shirt with album cover on front, song titles on back.
sizes: L, XL **$20**



SILHOUETTE T-SHIRT
Black shirt with front-only design: Bruce & Clarence silhouette, "Tour 2000."
sizes: L, XL **$20**

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BACKSTREET RECORDS

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Getting better all the time

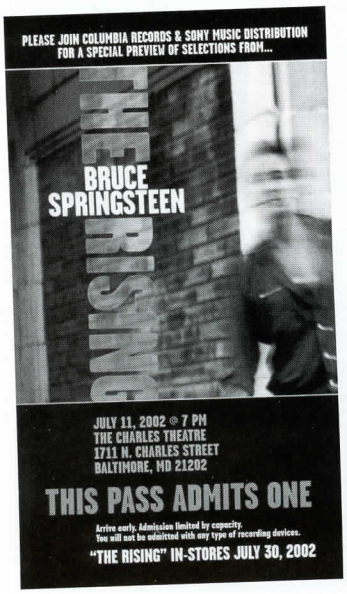
The Waiting List

By Christopher Phillips

When I tell non-Bruce fans about *Backstreets*, one of the questions I'm asked most often (right after "Wait, a whole magazine about what?") is, "So, are you the official fan club?"

The answer, of course, is no. *Backstreets* has been publishing for over 22 years now, but we're still completely independent from the Springsteen organization. We've struggled over the years to reach a readership that can continue to sustain an endeavor like this—before the internet helped get the word out, you may have seen one of us after a show on the *Tunnel* tour, or the *Joad* tour, handing out issues and flyers to fans. No, we're not officially endorsed, we've yet to be granted an interview with Springsteen, and we don't get to lounge backstage and help draw up the setlist.

But, as I tell these flabbergasted folks, there's a real upside to that independence: it keeps us honest. *Backstreets* is not a PR machine. If a performance is subpar, we can say it. If we think his new album bites, we can say it bites. The inevitable next question: "How often does that happen?" Um.... yeah, good point. Not very often. But of course, that's how we know we're following the right artist in the first place.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"THE RISING" IN-STORES JULY 30, 2002

I'll admit, I was nervous about *The Rising* after an early July listening party. Sony's official set-up started things on the wrong foot: "The main theme," fans were told as we settled in to get our first taste of the album, "is September 11 and its aftermath." Of course, it is and it isn't; but in any case I don't want to be told how to interpret a record before I've heard a note. My own expectations are troublesome enough. The five songs that followed—out of context, out of order, and played off a Beta tape—sounded nothing like the E Street record I'd been expecting. But it was a different experience altogether to hear the album in full, over time, on its own terms (and on mine—in the car, where music was meant to be heard), and *The Rising* became the soundtrack of my summer. Every once in a while, there's one disc that just won't leave my player—it doesn't happen often, and it's hard to predict what it'll be. No matter how much I'm looking forward to a record, even one from Springsteen, it's never a given. I'm glad to have the document that is *Live in New York City*; I came to love *The Ghost of Tom Joad*'s songs as Springsteen performed them on the solo acoustic tour; but those albums never lodged themselves in my stereo, demanding my must-hear-it-again attention. After a few uneasy spins, *The Rising* wound up surprising me by passing that most crucial "constant rotation" test. In the pre-digital age, I'd be on my second copy.

There were similar jitters at the beginning of the *Rising* tour. But Springsteen's lack of complacency, coupled with the natural development as the band plays night after night, have transformed the show from disappointing beginnings. Had this issue gone to press after the Detroit concert—the fourth in a row with exactly the same setlist, and one that just wasn't working—the story of the tour would have been much different than it is now, after the first U.S. leg. Longtime fans have seen enough to know that a rocky opening doesn't spell doom for the remainder of the tour—it's generally the way of things. But it's pretty astounding how far the *Rising* tour has come in just two months, and it's still in its early stages.

I originally planned this column to be a list of... not complaints, exactly, but in the more positive spirit of "Waitin' on a Sunny Day," of things I'm waiting for as the tour continues. I drew up the "waiting list" in August, and already it's pretty much obsolete. More surprises in the set? Done. The "dream of life" lines handed off to Nils? Done. "Thunder Road" off the must-play list? Done. Covers, a solo-piano slot, easing up on the *Darkness* material in favor of more diversity: done, done, done. I was waiting for Springsteen to embrace the records he made post-1984, and as the first U.S. leg came to a close, "Tougher Than the Rest" and "Streets of Philadelphia" snuck in under the wire. Even a long-shot wish, a return to the glorious tradition of live broadcasts, is coming to pass at the Barcelona show—for a European audience, at least. I won't cross that one off the list just yet.

In October, Steve Van Zandt told *Rolling Stone*, "Check in with us in a few more weeks, because it's gonna keep changing. I don't understand some of those bands who do exactly the same songs, the same moves, and they have all this production built into it so they can't change anything. We never stop trying to make it better." That's why some fans who sold off their tickets in mid-August were scrambling to buy them back again in September; that's why *Backstreets* winds up praising Springsteen's work far more often than we criticize it; and that's why I almost had to scrap my list for this column.

Almost. So what's left? Well, I'm waiting for the general admission experiment to be rethought or abandoned—judging by letters we received, many other fans feel the same way. I'm waiting for "Living Proof." I'd love an explanation for Springsteen's "robot dance." And if that's what my list has been whittled down to, it's a pretty sunny day.

* * *

Speaking of waitin', thanks for your patience while we put this monster-sized issue together. With enough Boss activity to choke a horse, or at least an editor, this is the biggest single-issue of *Backstreets* ever (our standard issue size is 36 pages). Maybe we're gluttons for punishment, as we watched this issue get bigger and bigger from July onward, but we just couldn't bring ourselves to close the book until the first U.S. leg was over. Thanks to everyone who helped our coverage by sending setlists, reviews, photos, and ticket stubs; everyone who took our online *Rising* poll; and all those readers and fans who help us stay on top of Bruce happenings on a daily basis for both the magazine and the backstreets.com website.

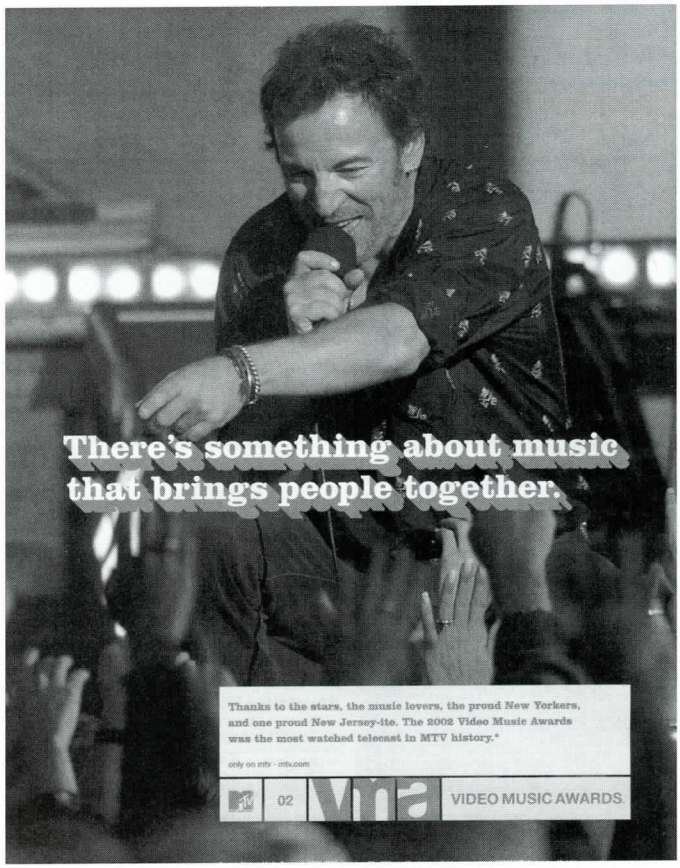
We rely on our readership around the world, whose contributions are essential—and such help with coverage for the next round of dates will go a long way toward our goal of getting the next issue together shortly after the 2002 tour wraps up in December. You can also help by making sure your subscription stays current. Our last issue, #74, has just sold out, so renewing your subscription on time really makes a difference. (If the "X" number on your label is X75, this is your last issue and we hope you'll renew right away; if you're an X76, we recommend you renew before issue #76 comes out to ensure no interruption in service). And we thank you for your ongoing support of this strange endeavor. Wait, a whole magazine about *what?*

LIPS

DOUBLE PLATINUM: Boss TV, Boss magazine covers, Boss political cartoons... with the release of *The Rising*, it's been time to party like it's 1984. This new Boss hysteria may have been partially self-generated, but marketing campaign or no, two million *Rising* fans can't be wrong. The album sold 526,976 copies in its first week alone, enough to qualify for gold. That made *The Rising* his third album to debut at number one in the U.S. (along with *Greatest Hits* and *Live 1975/85*); it held the number one slot in its second week, and stayed in the top ten for over a month. The album also entered the charts in the top slot in other countries around the world, including Finland, Norway, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Italy, and the U.K. As of October 3, after just over two months, *The Rising* was certified double platinum by the RIAA—that's two million served. . . . In October of 2001, a *Rolling Stone* online poll asked: "In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, which artist best represents America?" Springsteen received the most votes, with 38 percent; the closest runner-up was Dylan at 24%. So even before the creation of *The Rising*, many rock fans—not just the guy who said "We need you!"—were ready for Bosstime. Since then, with Bruce back on stage and in the public eye, rollingstone.com polls kept him on top. "Who still rocks the hardest?" Bruce and the E Street Band beat out the Rolling Stones, The Who and the Sex Pistols handily in September of 2002, with half of the total vote. "What's the best live band on the planet?" Bruce and the E Streeters took 59% of the vote, over the Dave Matthews Band, U2, and Pearl Jam. And "Who owns 2002?" That would be Bruce again, with 55% of the vote to Dave Matthews' 44%, with Eminem and Nelly sharing the last one percent. Not as "hot in herre" as Nelly thought. But yes, Em, it would still feel empty without you.

MEET THE PRESS: Covers of high profile magazines like *Time*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Uncut* had Springsteen gazing out from many a newsstand. Steve Van Zandt's mug was there as well, on the cover of the November issue of *Guitar Player*. On the cover or not, it was hard to find a piece of print media that didn't mention Bruce and the E Street Band somewhere in its pages, from *Vanity Fair* to *GQ* (which selected Bruce as their man of the decade for the '70s). . . . *Entertainment Weekly* recently ranked Bruce among the top 50 most powerful entertainers, at #47, also summing up the promo blitz: "The Boss reestablished his commercial cred this year with *The Rising*, his fastest-selling album ever. He also demonstrated a unique hold on the hearts of the media elite.... Even junior-skewing MTV paid homage. And thanks to an ongoing tour with the E Street Band, an October *Saturday Night Live* appearance, and likely multiple Grammy nods, *The Rising* will get a series of boosts that may keep it alive on the charts." . . . But the way you know you're really back on top: the cover of *The National Enquirer*. Along with exclusive photos of Lisa Marie's "wacky honeymoon," the September 3 issue of the supermarket tabloid advertised: "Springsteen's Ex-Lover Reveals All." Get ready for these revelations—former flame Karon Bihari disclosed some staggering facts about Springsteen's diet in the '70s: "He always ordered the same things—a burger, hot dog or chicken Parmesan.... One time I ordered mussels and he commented that they smelled like the camel cage at the zoo! I had to have them taken away. I discovered Bruce had not even eaten a salad before I met him. I ordered him one and as he ate it, he screwed up his face and said it tasted like cardboard." Bihari told the *Enquirer* that "Candy's Room" was "a song about us," but when it comes to inspiration, those camel-cage mussels must have provided sense-memory for "chicken lips and lizard hips and alligator eyes...."

I'M OUTTA HERE: So who *isn't* happy about all the *Rising* activity? According to the August 30 *New York Post*, Shania Twain parted ways with Jon Landau Management "after she accused him of spending too much attention on his other client, Bruce Springsteen. 'Shania threw a fit,' one insider said. 'Her new album is coming out in November, her single drops on September 23, and she felt he was spending too much time with Bruce and his *Rising* tour.' Landau tried to talk to the demanding diva, but when Twain tried to cut his rates from 20 percent to 10 percent, he 'told her to go scratch.' The outraged music industry insider added: 'Jon helped her sell 30 million albums, and she repays him by trying to skimp on his salary—nice, huh.'... A rep for Landau Management said: "It was a joint decision among friends to part ways."... Members of string quartet The Section rosined up their bows for a trip through the Springsteen songbook, on an album due November 5. *Hometown: The String Quartet Tribute to Bruce Springsteen* runs through "Born in the U.S.A." "The River," "Atlantic City," and others. . . . *Maximum Bruce: The Unauthorised Biography of Bruce Springsteen* presents Springsteen's life story on a spoken-word "CD Audio-Biog," the less-than-catchy description coined by UK label Chrome Dreams. With non-Bruce music in the background as his story is narrated (from "Smalltown Boy" to "Renaissance Man"), there's not much to recommend it, but the CD does include audio excerpts from Bruce interviews over the years. . . . Clarence Clemons' long awaited live album, *Live in Asbury Park*, also hits stores on Nov. 5. Recorded at the Stone Pony over Labor Day weekend 2001, the album includes seven CC compositions among its 13 tracks, as well as the Bruce-penned "From Small Things," "Paradise By the C" and "Savin' Up."... The Big Man also turns up on a new holiday single, "What Can I Give for Christmas?" on sax and vocals (recreating his Santa persona from the classic "Santa Claus is Coming to Town"). The song by Mark Fromm also features vocals by Maria Muldaur, Eric Andersen, and the late, great Rick Danko, and is available on a seven-song CD-single called *What Can I Give?* Clarence is featured again on the CD's closing track, "People Come Back Home." For more information and to order, visit www.markfromm.com or call (510) 482-6380.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02
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JEFFREY SNYDER PHOTO

A New York Times *ad thanks "one proud New Jersey-ite" in celebrating "the most watched telecast in MTV history."*

Bruce exhibit opens at Weisman

Working on the Highway

By Bob Tracy

Die-hard and would-be Springsteen fans packed the University of Minnesota's Weisman Art Museum on September 21 for the opening of "Springsteen: Troubadour of the Highway." The multimedia exhibit is a first for Springsteen, who confessed to the show's curator Colleen Sheehy he was "spooked" by the thought of seeing himself "hung on a museum wall."

"Troubadour" is a collection of photos, memorabilia, videos and lyrics drawn together as a chronicle of the artist's search for the American Dream—whether envisioned, promised, shattered, or real. This museum treatment of familiar images, words, and songs collects its focus from Springsteen's tried-and-true use of cars and the highway through the '70s, '80s and '90s as the setting for exploring the American psyche.

"From 'Thunder Road' to 'The Ghost of Tom Joad' and at every point along the way, Bruce Springsteen has employed images of cars and the highway as central features of his music... and [he] mines them more consistently and with more depth and complexity than any other rock artist," writes Sheehy in the exhibit's compact but exquisite catalogue.

Springsteen himself took a pass on opening night, but in a brief statement read to those attending the reception, he said he felt the photographers involved did "the best with what they had to work with." Bruce visited the show a week later, as did fans who made it a point to tramp through the exhibit while in town for the St. Paul stop on the *Rising* tour. At that September 29 performance, Springsteen dedicated "Racing in the Street" to Sheehy and "the good folks at the Weisman."

Dave Marsh, rock critic and Springsteen biographer, christened the show on September 22 with a gallery talk that slipped away from the museum's white wall and white wine confines and into the cool blue light of the nearby 400 Bar rock club. Marsh observed that through his journies to date, Springsteen has asked and settled the question "I wanna know if love is real"—it is.

"Troubadour" curator Colleen Sheehy at the Weisman on opening night.

FRANK STEFANKO PHOTO

Finding the land of hope and dreams is what Marsh suggested and seems to hope is the itinerary for the next road trip.

The "Troubadour" exhibit revisited the 400 Bar on September 28 as local Twin Cities bands played Springsteen covers. An accompanying film and video series picks up on the car and road theme, and there are more lectures to come, including a visit by *Backstreets*' own Christopher Phillips on November 17. "Troubadour" shares the Weisman walls with "Inside Cars: Surrounding Interiors," which focuses more on what happens inside the car as opposed to where it's heading.

"Springsteen: Troubadour of the Highway" runs through January 19 at the Weisman, and then hits the road for Detroit, Seattle and Newark in 2003 and 2004. Watch for more about "Troubadour of the Highway" in the next issue of *Backstreets*.

Video Shot in Asbury Park

Live vocal a highlight of "Lonesone Day"

Springsteen in Asbury Park for the "Lonesome Day" video shoot, September 19, 2002.

On a break from the *Rising* tour, Bruce Springsteen filmed a video for "Lonesome Day" during the third week of September. The video features a solo Springsteen, without the E Street Band—though Asbury Park, NJ, landmark "Tillie" does make an appearance.

The video was shot in and around Asbury Park, much of it set on the boardwalk, opening with Bruce having a cup of coffee at the Howard Johnson adjacent to Convention Hall. Filming also took place in Belmar and Sandy Hook, where "Brilliant Disguise" was shot at Fort Hancock's officers club 15 years prior.

Also like "Brilliant Disguise"—as well as "Streets of Philadelphia" and "Better Days"—the video for "Lonesome Day" features a new live vocal. Bruce sang the vocal live during the shoot, with Brendan O'Brien later editing and mastering the audio for the final cut.

Director Mark Pellington said, "The most striking thing about making this video was the fact that Bruce sang every take live, nailing the vocal take after take, each time. The final take came 16 hours after the first one, and he never missed a note." Pellington also directed Pearl Jam's "Jeremy" and U2's "One," as well as feature films *The Mothman Prophecies* and *Arlington Road*.

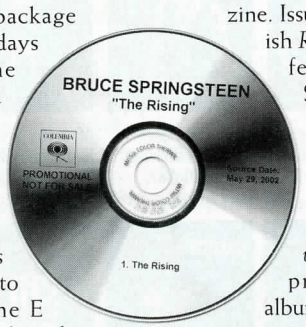
While Springsteen and the E Street Band's August 29 performance clip of "The Rising" was in rotation on VH1, "Lonesome Day" is the first official video shot for the new album. The video began airing on October 21, getting spins on MTV, MTV2, VH-1, and CMT.

RITA HUTTON PHOTOS

ON DISC

When *The Rising* dropped on July 30, a deluxe "special package" was available for a brief time. It's the kind of limited edition CD package R.E.M. has been producing for collectors for years now, with bands like Radiohead also following suit. While the music is the same as the standard issue, *The Rising*'s special edition packaged the CD in a miniature hardback book—a booklet of more than 40 pages, bound between heavy cardboard with a slab of black tape—of the same dimensions as a jewelcase turned on its side. Its pages include numerous photos and reproduced handwritten lyrics that aren't found in the standard package. This was Springsteen's first such commercial release—in 1995, a special digipack for *Greatest Hits* was a promotional item only. The first printing (100,000 copies) of *The Rising*'s special package sold out quickly, but a re-release is planned for November 12.

For completist collectors, another alternate package was a blast from the past—Costco carried a "long box" package for the CD, as in days of old, with the jewelcase sealed inside a 12" x 6" cardboard box with printed graphics. In Japan, where the official Sony website has started a campaign to have Bruce and the E Streeters come to play, the first edition of *The Rising* CD includes a sticker of the album's cover.



In the U.S., *The Rising* was also issued on cassette and vinyl, the latter a two-LP set that continues Columbia's honorable tradition of making Springsteen records available as actual *records*. For those who like to spin the black circle, all of Springsteen's albums to date with the exception of the massive *Tracks* (though including *18 Tracks*) have been issued on vinyl.

The Rising's title track was selected as its first single. In addition to online streaming (which gave advance listens of "The Rising," "Lonesome Day," "Into the Fire," and "Mary's Place"), the song was pressed on a one-track promotional CD from Columbia, in very limited quantities. A CD single for "The Rising" was released commercially as well (Springsteen's first in the U.S. since "Streets of Philadelphia") on July 16, two weeks before the album. This two-track single added "Land of Hope and Dreams" as a B-side, in the version already familiar to fans from *Live in New York City*.

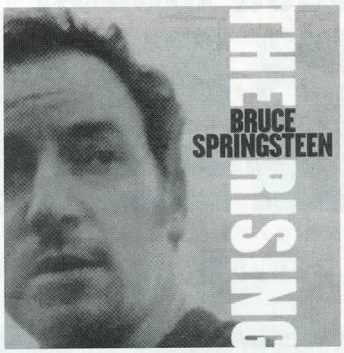
Those hoping for previously unreleased B-sides will get their wish with the album's second single, "Lonesome Day." A European CD-single is slated for mid-November (no commercial single is planned in the U.S.), which will reportedly make two live performances available for the first time on CD: an acoustic "Born in the U.S.A." recorded for the BBC in 1998, and "The Rising" live in Barcelona (10/16/02). Anyone waiting for studio outtakes—Bruce has mentioned two songs recorded during the *Rising* sessions that didn't make the album, for starters—will have to keep waiting.

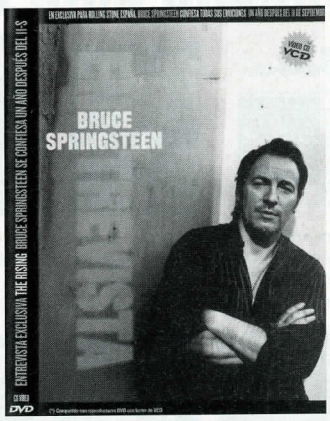
In Spain, bonus *Rising* material of a different stripe came as a freebie with *Rolling Stone* magazine. Issue 35 of the Spanish *Rolling Stone* (which featured the same Springsteen cover shot as issue 903 in the U.S.), came packaged with a free promotional *En Trevista* Video CD to promote the new album. The VCD features interview footage with Springsteen onstage at Convention Hall, taken from a generic promotional interview put together by Sony for the European market. In this format, questions are printed onscreen and Bruce's responses are subtitled in Spanish. The program runs nearly 17 minutes, including silent rehearsal footage intercut with video of the interview as Springsteen muses about *The Rising*. The disc is housed in a standard DVD box with full-color sleeve. As with all VCDs, the disc can be played on a computer's CD-ROM drive or on compatible DVD players.

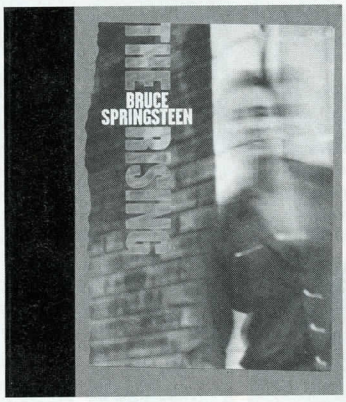
Almost lost among the *Rising* hullabaloo was an audiophile release on the same day, the long-awaited Super Audio CD version of *Live in New York City*. SACD, a new audio format developed by Sony and Philips Electronics and launched in 1999, touts exceptional sound quality as well as space for multichannel data. Of course, it also requires a Super Audio CD player. *Live in New York City* is Springsteen's first title released on SACD. *The Absolute Sound* magazine reports: "...the SACD's stereo presentation minimally outdoes that of the CD. The reason to invest in this is for its multichannel capability. Granted, it's not stunning, but it places you in the center of Madison Square Garden, where you're surrounded by thousands of Boss fanatics. This is a far cry from intimacy, and the mix constantly varies each instrument's loudness, and, to some degree, location. Rear channels simulate drum and vocal reverberations, though this isn't everyone's idea of a good environment. But the cavernous nature has its appeal, in a fantasy-fulfilling sort of way... with audio quality that's a grade above the DVD-Video's 5.1 mix."

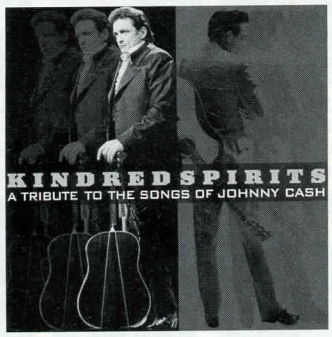
Springsteen's cover of "Give My Love to Rose" hits CD for the first time on the various artists album *Kindred Spirits: A Tribute to the Songs of Johnny Cash*. Springsteen's performance of the song originally aired on television, as part of the April 18, 1999 "All-Star Tribute to Johnny Cash." Producer Marty Stuart (who contributes "Hey Porter" to the album) told *ICE* Magazine: "[Bob] Dylan made a statement one time. He said, 'One man, one song and one guitar can do more damage than an entire army onstage if it's the right man, the right guitar and the right song.' That was the case with 'Give My Love to Rose' and Bruce Springsteen. Truly from a troubadour's perspective, it was magic. Just him and the guitar." Originally planned for the spring, the delayed release of *Kindred Spirits*, with 14 tracks in all, came on September 24.

Later this fall, Springsteen will be among those collected on a box set from Columbia/Legacy, *Freedom: Songs From the Heart of America*. The three-CD, 65-song set is a companion piece to an upcoming PBS series, *Freedom: A History of US*. Springsteen is actually represented by a Bob Dylan song, the previously released live recording of "Chimes of Freedom." Other tracks planned for the box include one from Dylan himself, "The Times They Are A-Changin' "; Woody and Arlo Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land"; and Johnny Cash's "Song of the Patriot."









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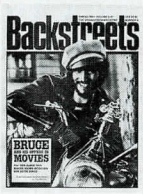
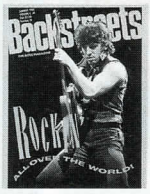
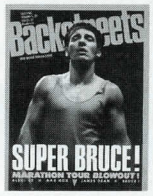


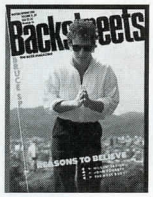
#9 Bruce in the movies; Beaver Brown; Boss books.....$8



#14 Rockin' the world: tour '85; Boss club; R.E.M. interview.....$5



#15 Super Bruce! '85 tour; Sun City; Mad Dog interview.....$5



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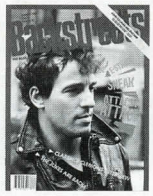

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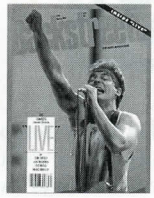

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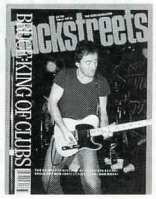

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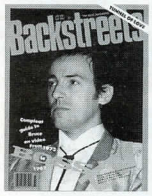

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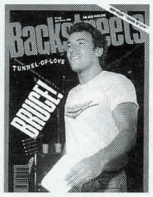

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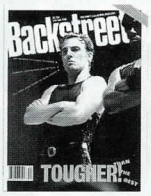

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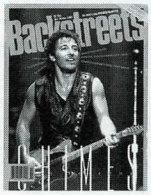

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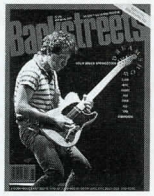

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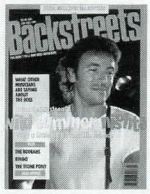

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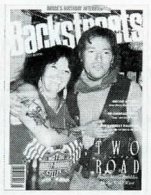

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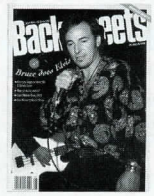

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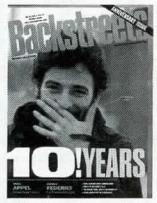

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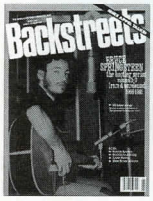

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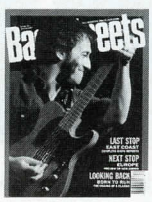

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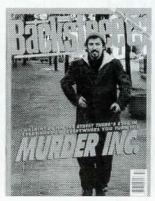

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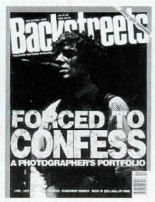

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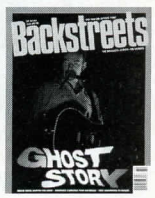

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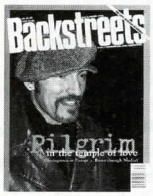

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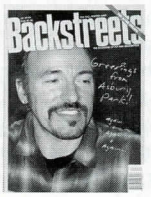

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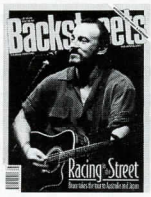

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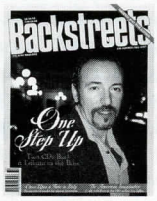

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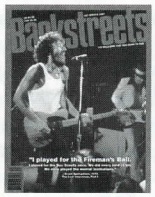

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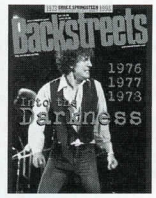

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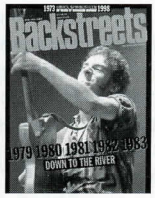

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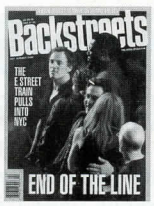

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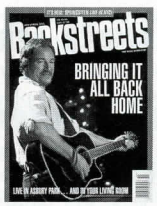

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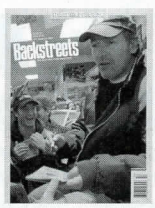

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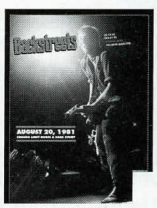

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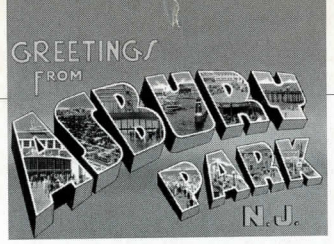


The Stone Pony stays alive

This Time It's For Real

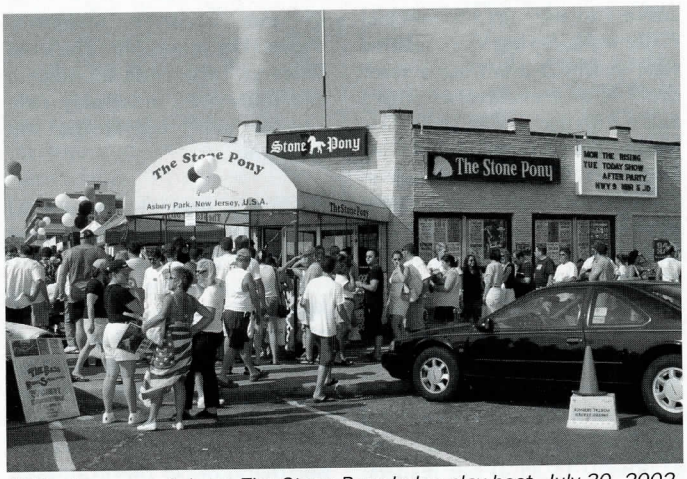
By Bob Makin

In the wake of an out-of-control punk festival that threatened to close the Stone Pony down, owner Domenic Santana told *Backstreets* that the legendary Asbury Park nightclub will remain open. Recent reports printed by both the Associated Press and *Rolling Stone* said that Santana would "turn his back on the Asbury Park music scene." The club owner says both are "old news."

The three-day "Holiday in the Sun Festival," held in early September at the Stone Pony, featured old-school punk groups the Exploited and the Dead Kennedys. Twelve-hundred tickets were sold, but several hundred more fans showed up. "We were unprepared," Santana told the Associated Press at the time. "The crowd was hanging all over the place."

Santana agreed to fix the vandalism and massive littering by squatters who spent the weekend in abandoned buildings, unable to afford hotel rooms or find adequate food, water and toilets. Despite reports that the festival spelled the club's demise, Santana plans to keep the Stone Pony open, in order to continue the good work done this summer to help revitalize the city—an effort that was a far cry from the melee that erupted in early September.

In early July, Bruce Springsteen quietly donated $50,000 to the city of Asbury Park for playground repairs. A city representative told the *Asbury Park Press*, "A lot of kids will be very happy because of what he's done." The last weekend in July was a special one in Asbury Park. As the sound of Bruce Springsteen's *The Rising* blasted through the city, I couldn't help but also recall Steve Van Zandt's "This Time It's For Real" in relation to the latest grassroots efforts to return the boardwalk town to the glory days that so many New Jerseyans remember fondly.



DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

With all eyes on Asbury, The Stone Pony helps play host, July 30, 2002.

Things began on July 21 with the Jersey Jams, Jersey Cares Summer Arts Carnival, organized by the Jersey Jams Fund, which provides music therapy and music scholarship to the New Jersey families of 9/11. Families came to the Pony for a free day of boardwalk-like fun: sno-cones, cotton candy, face painting, plus art and music workshops. Those who stayed until the end of the day not only enjoyed performances by acts like deSol, Matt Angus Thing, and New Blood Revival, but also were thrilled by a surprise visit (though no performance) from Springsteen.

The Boss really shot the city full of hope the following week. With dress rehearsals at Convention Hall on the boardwalk, the release of his landmark new disc, and a pilgrimage by the *Today Show* to capture it all, Bruce brought the attention of millions to Asbury Park.

In order to help beautify the city before *Today*'s cameras, dozens of volunteers cleaned up the downtown and oceanfront areas. The cleanup was followed by two days of Bruce-related events at the Stone Pony. On July 29, a listening party for *The Rising* kicked off with a slide show by local historian Helen Pike called "Asbury Park's Glory Days." Trivia contests and prizes kept the crowd going till midnight, when Red Bank-based Jack's Music Shoppe began to sell copies of *The Rising* at five locations throughout the Pony and its outdoor stage area. Former E Street Band drummer Vini "Mad Dog" Lopez then hosted a seven-hour Bruce-a-thon that featured every recorded Springsteen song, to which much of the packed crowd took delight in singing at the top of their lungs.

That took the celebration up to the 7 a.m. live broadcast of *Today* from Convention Hall, the boardwalk and the beach, on July 30. Springsteen and the E Street Band performed four songs for the cameras, and when *Today* went to commercial, Bruce gave his own plug to Sonny's Southern Cuisine on Cookman Avenue, just doors from where he got his start in Asbury at the Upstage. He suggested that the crowd meet him there for ribs later.

Several downtown merchants had incentives for visitors to win free tickets to an afternoon show at the Pony, starring the young Springsteen-influenced acts Highway 9, New Blood Revival, and Joe D'Urso & Stone Caravan. Those who shopped downtown also got an extra perk: $20 tickets to a second Springsteen dress rehearsal that night.

When Bruce officially kicked off his *Rising* Tour with the E Street Band on August 7 at Continental Airlines Arena, he thanked the folks who attended the Convention Hall shows in his introduction to "My City of Ruins." He also urged his fans to visit Asbury Park, whose blossoming revitalization effort has become a beacon of hope for better days in New Jersey.

Besides visiting Asbury's growing number of merchants, which include such excellent restaurants as Sonny's and Moonstruck and several exceptional art galleries and antique shops, here are a few websites you can visit from afar to help move the revitalization effort along: www.savetillie.com, www.palaceforsale.com, www.savethepony.com, and www.jerseyjamsfund.org.

Notes From the Shore : Original E Street Band drummer Vini "Mad Dog" Lopez has united two Asbury Park groups that he played with in the 1960s and '70s: Steel Mill, one of Springsteen's early bands, and Cold Blast and Steel, a great rock 'n' soul band that came up with the Jukes, the Shakes, the Shots and Cahoots. A Cold Blast of Steel Mill played on August 17 at the Clearwater Festival in Asbury Park and August 31 at The Stone Pony. Lopez got permission to use Springsteen's Steel Mill songs, and is in the band with several members of Cold Blast and Steel. . . . Sprout won the Stone Pony House Band Contest this summer, but it doesn't look like that will mean much for the ska-punk band. The club has been using Matt Witte's New Blood Revival, Highway 9, deSol, and Joe D'Urso & Stone Caravan on a more regular basis. . . . Plans to reopen the doors of the Fastlane have been put on hold. . . . The Third Annual Light of Day Benefit will be held at The Tradewinds on Nov. 2, once again to benefit the Parkinson's Disease Foundation. Confirmed performers include Boccigalupe & the Bad Boys, Joe D'Urso & Stone Caravan, Joe Grushecky & the Houserockers, La Bamba & the Hubcaps, and Garland Jeffreys.

CON TEST

Backstreets Ultimate Quiz III Results

All Tied Up

By Christopher Phillips

As if there wasn't enough for Bruce fans to keep track of this summer, setting VCRs and dialing for tickets... amidst the flurry of Springsteen activity, we threw our third Ultimate Quiz into the mix. The first *Backstreets* trivia contest since 1995, these 30 questions may have helped pass the time until *The Rising*'s release, but they also kept some fans in the dark—literally. Maria Macaluso wrote, "My only hope is that the next quiz be published in January, when it's cold and there's nothing else to do. Many a beautiful summer day fell by the wayside while I obsessed over these questions." Hey, we called this one "Attack of the Ultimate Quiz," so you can't say you weren't warned.

While no one got every question right, there wasn't a single question that stumped everyone—so if we kept you from getting a tan, at least it was an even-handed quiz. Lauren Onkey and Shawn Poole, who answered more questions correctly than anyone else—a highly commendable 28 out of 30—were each stumped by completely different questions. (For the record, Onkey missed numbers 14 and 23, while Poole missed numbers 15 and 16.) So for them, the quiz isn't over yet—there can only be one Man/Woman at the Top, so we'll be holding a playoff to break the tie. The grand champion of the Ultimate Quiz III will be announced in issue #76, along with the questions and answers that Onkey and Poole are facing in the lightning round.

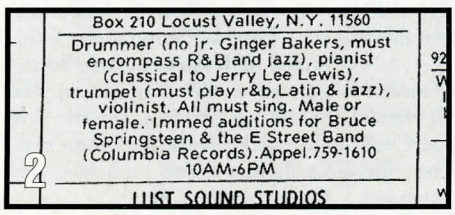
But for everyone else's sake, we won't wait until the blue moon turns to gold to reveal the answers to the quiz itself—especially considering the frazzled state in which it left many readers. "Congratulations once again," wrote Colin Dale, "on leaving me confused, bewildered and exhausted from trying to complete the quiz. I might have answered all 30 if I had only another two or three... months!" Of course, driving people crazy is only *part* of the motivation behind the *Backstreets* Ultimate Quizzes. We've also tried to devise questions with answers that—though trivial—will be enlightening, entertaining, and of interest to all of our readers, whether you threw yourself into the quiz or threw it out the window. And now, the answers to the Backstreets Ultimate Quiz III—for the first 30 questions, at least. Lauren and Shawn, you've only just begun to fight.

1. Who is Mrs. Maria Ayala?

The former Maria Espinosa was little Brucie **Springsteen's first kiss** (at a dance at the former YMCA in downtown Freehold). Bruce mentioned her by name in his 11/8/96 performance of "Freehold" at St. Rose of Lima: "Maria Espinosa, where are you tonight?" After the concert, the *Asbury Park Press* answered that question, finding Maria Espinosa Ayala still living in Freehold, a mother of four and grandmother of four, and flattered at the mention: "I can't believe he remembers my name." About half of our quiz takers did too.

2. A Village Voice classified ad brought Roy Bittan and Max Weinberg to audition for the E Street Band; what two other instruments did the ad call for?

Most readers got this one right, though we did get one guess of "glockenspiel and harpsichord." The *Village Voice* ad is pictured in Marc Eliot's book *Down Thunder Road* as well as at one of our favorite websites, thesmokinggun.com, showing Bruce and the band looking to add **trumpet** ("must play r&b, Latin & jazz") and **violin**. "All must sing."


Box 210 Locust Valley, N.Y. 11560
Drummer (no jr. Ginger Bakers, must encompass R&B and jazz), pianist (classical to Jerry Lee Lewis), trumpet (must play r&b, Latin & jazz), violinist. All must sing. Male or female. Immed auditions for Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band (Columbia Records). Appel. 759-1610 10AM-6PM
LUST SOUND STUDIOS

3. What was the name of Clarence's dressing room on the 1999-2000 tour?

The Big Room, Big Man's Hideaway, Big Man's West, The White House (a reference to CC as the next President of the United States), Mokshagun, Lion's Den... all were nice tries, as was Darren Cooksey's "Sax Therapist." But the sign on the Big Man's dressing room door, as revealed in the December 2001 issue of *Sound & Vision*, reads **"The Temple of Soul."** Clarence told the magazine, "My dressing room followed me on the tour. Wherever we went, there was always a Temple of Soul, always set up the same way. It just gives you the sense of being in the same place all the time—a sense of stability." The Sax Therapist is in.

4. On what official release can you find this sequence: "No Surrender," "Born in the U.S.A.," "Working on the Highway"?

A fairly easy one, most got this one right. These *Born in the U.S.A.* songs can be found in this order not on an eight-track tape or an obscure promotional CD, but on the DVD title **The Paris Concert for Amnesty International: The Struggle Continues**, which captures Springsteen's solo acoustic performance from December 10, 1998.

5. The following are bandleaders in Springsteen songs. According to the lyrics, name their bands:

a. Little Willie... **& the Soul Brooms** (Seaside Bar Song)

b. James Young... **& the Immortal Ones** (County Fair)

c. Little Melvin... **& the Invaders** (So Young and in Love)

You had to go to *Tracks* for this one, to find Littles Willie and Melvin, but it wasn't as simple as that. We also threw in an unreleased outtake, in which James Young and the Immortal Ones play two guitars, baby, bass and drums at the "County Fair." Our favorite guess: James Young and the Youngsters.

6. Which Springsteen song has been officially released by Columbia in the most live versions?

"Darkness on the Edge of Town" has seemed like a real concert favorite of Springsteen's over the years, and the official

TOP SCORES

28
Lauren Onkey, Muncie, IN
Shawn Poole, Philadelphia, PA

27
Ralf Dissman, Germany**
Jos Westenberg, The Netherlands

26
Chris Higgerson, Springfield, IL
Samuli Lintula, Finland
Flynn McLean, Wheaton, MD

25
Heikki Leivo, Finland

24
Fred Parker, Abingdon, MD*
Craig Statham, Scotland
Jyrki Virta, Finland
Stale Aune Fjellstad, Norway

23
Troy Deckebach, Glenside, PA
Richard Freeman, Vancouver, WA
Morten Kjaervik, Norway
Dirk De Bot, Belgium
Johanna Pirttijarvi, Finland
Christopher Lubbers, Peekskill, NY

22
Thomas J. Ryan, Middletown, NJ
Paul Beneker, The Netherlands
Maria Macaluso, Wenonah, NJ
Michael Bossiett, Edison, NJ

Ten names will be randomly drawn from *all* participants to receive a Backstreets T-shirt. The Ultimate Quiz III Champion will be announced in Backstreets #76.

**Ultimate Quiz II Runner-Up*
***Ultimate Quiz II Second Runner-Up*

audio documentation bears that out—the song didn't make the cut for *Live in New York City* and still manages to be found in four different official live versions (from 12/29/80 on the *Live* box; 9/22/92 on *In Concert/MTV Plugged*; 12/9/95 on a CD5 for "The Ghost of Tom Joad"; 4/19/96 on the "Missing" CD5). "Darkness" was the answer we were looking for, but since the question didn't rule out video releases, we also accepted "Thunder Road."

7. Fill in the blank: "Between Heaven & Earth," "Father's Day," _____.

Springsteen registered three songs for copyright with the Library of Congress on April 7, 1995. **"Blindspot"** (registration number: PAu-1-840-769) was the missing one on our list. Copyright registrations are a matter of public record, and the United States Library of Congress offers a searchable database at www.copyright.gov. If only the website included downloadable audio files: all three of these songs have yet to see the light of day.

8. Name one song that references: New Jersey, an abandoned factory, a state trooper, a stolen car, Vietnam, a Thunder Road, a mansion on the hill, a lion's den, and a blasted TV.

What sounds like the Bruce song to end all Bruce songs is actually a tongue-in-cheek homage sung by Bob Dylan—er, "Lucky Wilbury," that is. The song is **"Tweeter and the Monkey Man,"** from the Traveling Wilburys' first album; "Tweeter" has also been covered by the Headstones.

9. I was a child; we was running through the outlands; I made the call; I held you in my arms; the sky went black....

One more thing happened. What was it?

Just a prisoner of your dreams? Lots of Springsteen's characters are—and if you figured out that they did these things in their sleep the night before, you were on the right track. There are six officially released Springsteen songs that include the clause "Last night I dreamed," and these are five of the phrases that follow—from "My Father's House," "Take 'Em as They Come" "Stolen Car," "One Step Up," and "Missing," respectively. We were looking for the sixth. A couple of people got close to the right answer, only to be thrown off track by "Last night I dreamed... of lipstick and tight little cotton shorts" (from the unreleased "Sell It and They Will Come"). But the question specifically asked for one more thing that *happened*, and the line that finishes the story comes from "Valentine's Day": Last night I dreamed **my eyes rolled straight back in my head.**

10. Name seven original Springsteen compositions he debuted live in the '90s that have never been officially released in any form.

While Springsteen may have been in search of his rock voice in the '90s, he seemed to have no problem cranking out catchy folk tunes—some funny, some poignant—that entertained audiences on the *Tom Joad* tour. We took any seven from this list: **"I'm Turning into Elvis," "It's the Little Things That Count," "Sell it and They Will Come," "Pilgrim in the Temple of Love," "There Will Never Be any Other for Me but You," "Long Time Coming," "The Hitter,"** and **"Freehold"** (or its variant, **"Michigan"**). Only "Freehold" has been heard from again, but it's surely only a matter of time before "Pilgrim"—AKA "Santa Gets a Blowjob"—becomes a holiday standard.

11. Where would you have found two old down pillows, Green Bay paper towels, and 14 coats of white varnish?

Blame Bob Crane for this one—our two-time Ultimate Quiz champ took himself out of the running in order to help create questions for Round Three; this one, courtesy of Crane, was a doozy. Only about ten percent of quiz takers got it right. Jim Newett offered, "Sounds like it could be an old shack at Greasy Lake." Others guessed "In a room above a surfboard factory," "Danny Federici's basement," and "Tex Vinyard's house." Our "Nice Try" award goes to Maria Macaluso: "These items can be found on pages 178-179 of the *Songs* book.... The white varnish is on the surfboard, and there are two old pillows and paper towels there as well."

Ah yes, but are they Green Bay paper towels? The place to find it all, right down to the brand name, would have been **Max Weinberg's drum kit**, circa 1980-'81. The February 1981 issue of *Musician* magazine detailed the E Street Band's equipment on the *River* tour: "The Mighty Max, as he's introduced nightly, brought to his drum list as highly developed a sense of detail as he brings to his playing. He uses a 24" x 14" Ludwig 6-ply bass, with an Emperor head and 14 coats of white varnish; it's stuffed with two old down pillows and miked with a Beyer 88.... The toms are slightly muffled with Green Bay paper towels—Weinberg insists on that brand." The same information was later reprinted in *Steven Rosen's Rock Lives: Bruce Springsteen*, so there was another chance to come across it.

We especially liked Joe Gillooly's stab at this question—"The new offices of *Backstreets*?" Sorry, Joe, only 11 coats of white varnish here.

12. "The E Street Shuffle" has incorporated Curtis Mayfield's "Move on Up" in performance; what other Mayfield-penned song was "Shuffle" based on?

This comes straight from the horse's mouth, as Springsteen wrote about his second album in *Songs*, on page 25: "The opening cut, 'The E Street Shuffle,' is a reflection of a community that was partly imagined and partly real.... Musically, I based the song on Major Lance's '60s hit **'The Monkey Time,'** a dance song." That song was written by Curtis Mayfield. Lance had six Top 40 hits over two years, between 1963 and 1965, and all but one of them were Mayfield-penned. "The Monkey Time" was his first, peaking at number eight.

13. What inspiration for a Springsteen character was on this earth from 1918-1997?

A few people who missed this one were at least on the right track by naming places rather than people—like the Palace Amusements carousel, or the rug mill in Freehold—but in "Youngstown," the **Jeanette Blast Furnace** became the character "sweet Jenny." The furnace was built in 1918, ceased operations in late 1977, and was demolished in early 1997, while Springsteen was still touring for *The Ghost of Tom Joad*.

14. What do these songs have in common: "Highway Patrolman," "The New Timer," "Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street?," "Incident on 57th Street," "Meeting Across the River"?

The different answers we received to this question—that all of these songs involve modes of transportation, all were written by Bruce Springsteen—reminded us of Cliff Clavin's desperate answer to a *Jeopardy* question in an episode of *Cheers*: "Who are four people who have never been in my kitchen?" It may be true, but it ain't the right answer. Still, over half of respondents did come up with it: in all of these songs, **the title is never mentioned in the lyrics.**

15. What piece of wooden equipment was placed under the stage during the 1992-'93 tour?

It's not a metronome, a ping-pong table, a baseball bat, a rocking chair, or a Vibra Slap—much as we would have loved to work the last into another quiz. The answer can be found in the November 1992 issue of *Musician* magazine, in a cover story by Bill Flanagan: "Under the stage is one piece of equipment the band depends on during the three-to-four hour concerts—a wooden **outhouse** with a little moon carved in the door. Sadly, there's no toilet inside, just a garbage pail. 'I don't know whose job it is to empty that bucket after the show,' one of the background singers said with a shudder. 'But I'm glad it's not me.' "

16. Name the two longest and the two shortest recordings in Bruce's catalog of officially released songs.

Considering all of Springsteen's audio releases, the shortest tracks are **"Chicken Lips & Lizard Hips"** (1:36) and **"Held Up Without a Gun"** (1:15). The longest are both live versions: **"The River"** from *Live/1975-85* (11:37) and **"Tenth Avenue Freeze-out"** from *Live in New York City* (16:09). We figured that was enough of a challenge, with the answers encompassing live tracks, a contribution to a various-artists compilation ("Chicken Lips"), and a B-side that's still only available on vinyl ("Held Up"). But, as with question six, a few quiz takers opened up another can of worms, considering songs officially released on video. Since our question didn't specifically state otherwise, we allowed for an alternate set of correct answers—but if you decided to go there, you had to get it right. If considering video tracks, the two shortest remain the same, and the two longest are "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out" from the *Live in New York City* DVD (a longer edit than the album version), and "Roll of the Dice" from the *In Concert: MTV Plugged* Laserdisc.

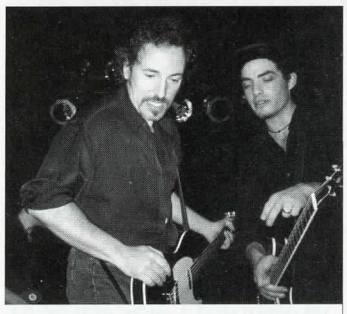
17. The original photograph that was used on the cover of Tracks showed a pack of cigarettes on the table, along with some other pocket paraphernalia, all subsequently removed. Name the brand of cigarettes.

As seen in Phil Ceccola's original, untouched photo on page 14 of *Backstreets* #61 (also in the first edition of Dave Marsh's *Born to Run*, on page 67), it was a pack of **Marlboro** cigarettes that went missing along with some loose change. Which brings us to the next question....

18. Name two Springsteen songs in which the narrator is a smoker.

"Missing" and **"Loose Change."** The preacher may light up a butt and take a drag in "The Ghost of Tom Joad," and Le Bin Son does the same in "Galveston Bay." But to find a narrator who smokes you have to look to the non-album track "Missing" ("Went to the kitchen, my cigarettes were lying there") and the 1991 outtake "Loose Change," later released on *Tracks* ("Drove around for a while, smoked a few cigarettes").

DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO



SAL DIMARIA PHOTO

Now I've been down Bob's family tree: Bruce performing with Carol Dennis (above, far left), and Jakob Dylan (at left)

19. Springsteen has played not only with Bob Dylan, but with two of Dylan's close relatives. Name them.

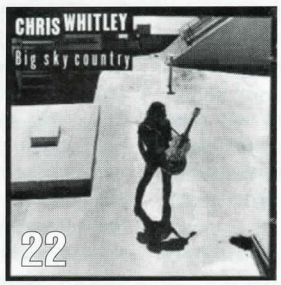
Nearly everyone got the Wallflowers' **Jakob Dylan**, Bob's son. But only half as many were able to name the other. Peter Himmelmann, Dylan's son-in-law came up a lot, with one reader admitting: "I'm not sure about this, but what other artist related to Dylan is there?" There's **Carol Dennis**, a backup singer in Springsteen's '92-93 band, who was also Dylan's "secret" wife from 1986-1992, and mother of two of his children.

20. Rambo had a starring role in "Real Man." What other Springsteen song originally featured the character before leaving him on the cutting room floor?

Good guesses: "TV Movie," "57 Channels." A not-as-good guess: "Cadillac Ranch" (when the song was written, Rambo wasn't even a glimmer in Sly Stallone's eye). The right answer: **"Tougher Than the Rest."** In *Songs*, Bruce reveals that "Tougher" was "originally written as a rockabilly song," with on page 196 of that book showing an early draft that namechecks he-man types like King Kong and Tarzan. And, of course, the character that would later be blowin' 'em down in "Real Man": "If you want Mr. Rambo then baby be my guest, but if you're rough and ready for love...."

21. What do "Hungry Heart," "Thunder Road," "Dancing in the Dark," and "Viva Las Vegas" have in common?

All have been **performed twice in the same concert**, whether for a video shoot, like "Dancing in the Dark," or just because, dammit, that's what the occasion deserved, like "Viva" both opening and closing Springsteen's first show in Vegas. We did receive more than a few *yes-that's-true-but-it's-still-wrong* answers like "In each song, the lyrics rhyme." But a few quiz takers came up with another valid commonality that hadn't occurred to us: all four Springsteen song titles are also movie titles. We didn't see that one coming, but anyone who gave that answer got full credit. We could have added "Leap of Faith" to the list, another song played twice in one show for a video shoot... but then, that was a movie title too.

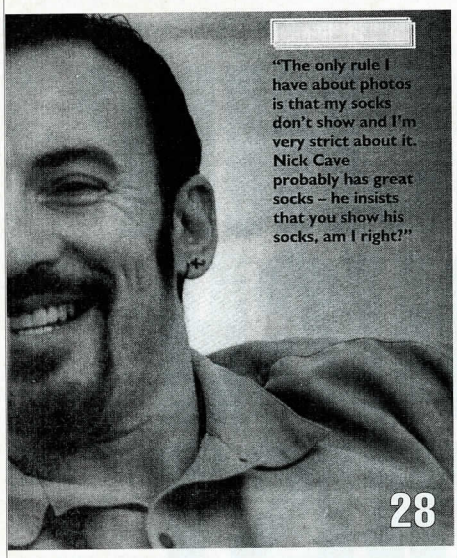


22. On the 1999-2000 tour, what was the first song heard in the arena after Bruce and the E Street Band finished their show?

"When this is over, over and through...." That's a fitting way to punctuate the end of a show, and it's the opening line of **Chris Whitley's "Big Sky Country."** Heard after nearly every '99-2000 show as the lights came up (though not every show—we also gave credit for "Summer Wind" by Frank Sinatra), the Whitley song was also on Springsteen's '92-93 pre-show tape.

23. "Cover Me" sleeve : '63 Impala = Tunnel of Love sleeve : _____.

On the cover of *Tunnel of Love*, Springsteen is pictured leaning against his **'67 Cadillac**


"The only rule I have about photos is that my socks don't show and I'm very strict about it. Nick Cave probably has great socks – he insists that you show his socks, am I right?"
28

DeVille. Other views of this beauty can be seen in both the *Songs* book and the *Tunnel of Love* tourbook. Throwing many quiz-takers was the fact that the car was misidentified as a '63 in both Christopher Sandford's *Point Blank* (page 418) and the January 1999 issue of MOJO magazine. A visual check using online Cadillac resources, as performed by many of the fans who got this one right, reveals it to be a '67. We asked a GM employee, just to be sure, so thanks to Matt Orel for confirmation on this one. The car has since been given a coffee-colored paint job, in reference to Chuck Berry's "Nadine." In *Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll,* Springsteen said, "I've never seen a coffee-colored Cadillac, but I know exactly what one looks like"—and now he's got the living proof.

24. Good-lookin' : Roberts = Handsome : _____.

One reader wrote that this question "can only be compared to a complex mathematics problem." Well, it's not Calculus, but you did need knowledge of three different Springsteen songs from three different albums to figure out the answer: **Heaton.** We'll let one of our winners, Lauren Onkey, explain it: "This is my thinking: 'Good lookin' Joe' and 'Handsome Dan' are from 'Tougher Than the Rest'; you've put in a last name for Joe from another song (Joe Roberts from 'Highway Patrolman'), so we need a last name for Dan from another song (Dan Heaton from 'Youngstown.')" Exactly.

Our favorite guess came from Jim Newett, whose mind apparently went to *Pretty Woman* rather than *The Ghost of Tom Joad:* Good-lookin' is to Roberts as Handsome is to... "Gere."

25. What, according to Springsteen, is Latin for "Please clean up your room"?

One reader answered "dvoo-jmjohvt," with the explanation, "I am using my work e-mail and would rather not make the firewall scream—have shifted all letters down one position." Shifting them back up brings the right answer. Springsteen's blush-free rap on the *Tom Joad* tour about the joys of oral sex usually included this definition of **cunnilingus** for the sake of any younger ears in the audience.

26. Name all the songs on Lucky Town that feature harmonica.

With no harmonica credits in the liner notes, you had to listen for this one—and you had to listen *hard.* There are four. **"Local Hero," "Souls of the Departed,"** and **"My Beautiful Reward"** are pretty easy. The key to this question was the fourth, **"Living Proof,"** on which a quick harmonica blast doesn't show up until midway through the song's fade-out. So if you skipped ahead anywhere before the 4:34 mark, you'd miss this one—as many did.

27. What Academy Award-winning actor released a cover of Springsteen's "Fire" in 1983?

Gotta admit, we thought this was a tough one. Until answer after answer came in: **Robin Williams.** Of course, Oscar-winner Williams "Fire" in the voice of Elmer Fudd, on a record released in 1983. What's so tough about that? Not a thing—we just had a completely different answer in mind. If we were smart, we would have asked for *two* Academy Award-winning actors who covered "Fire" in 1983, but we didn't stop to think that more than one name would fit the bill. So who were we thinking of? We're not telling yet—that'll be part of the tiebreaker between Onkey and Poole, so look for the answer in *Backstreets* #76. For now, special recognition goes to Morten Kjervik, Ralf Dissman, Ronnie de Champs, and Stale Aune Fjellstad, the only ones who came up with our mystery actor. Or who forgot about "Fi-wuh" just like we did.

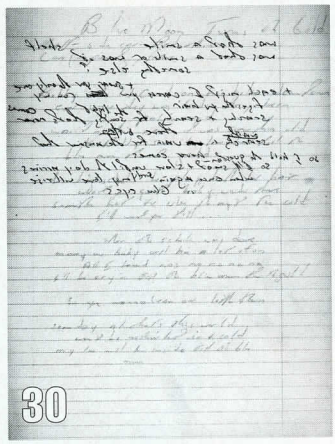
28. Springsteen has laid down one rule regarding photographs—that his _____ not be shown. Fill in the blank.

This was our *Match Game* question— Gene Rayburn, rest his soul, would have added a nice leer. Appropriately, we got answers worthy of Charles Nelson Reilly, like "butt," "ass," and "armpits." But the right answer? **Socks.** Many guessed "children," and that would seem to make sense, but as Springsteen told the *New Musical Express* (which used it as a pull-quote) in their March 9, 1996 issue: "The only rule I have about photos is that my socks don't show and I'm very strict about it. Nick Cave probably has great socks—he insists that you show his socks, am I right?"

29. How many Springsteen concerts featured every song from The Ghost of Tom Joad?

The *Tom Joad* tour highlighted much of Springsteen's 1995 album, but only **eight** concerts featured all 12 songs. Though "My Best Was Never Good Enough" eventually dropped out of the set completely, it was played at 36 out of the first 37 shows, so this question turns on "The New Timer." The least-frequently played song from *Tom Joad,* it was performed at eight shows in November and December of 1995, along with every other song from the record. The chart on pages 30-31 of *Backstreets* #52 was an easy way to figure this one out.

30. Finish this line from a Springsteen composition. (Hint: The phrase in the blank is also the title of the song.)



Page 229 of Songs, *reversed with the help of a little digital magic.*

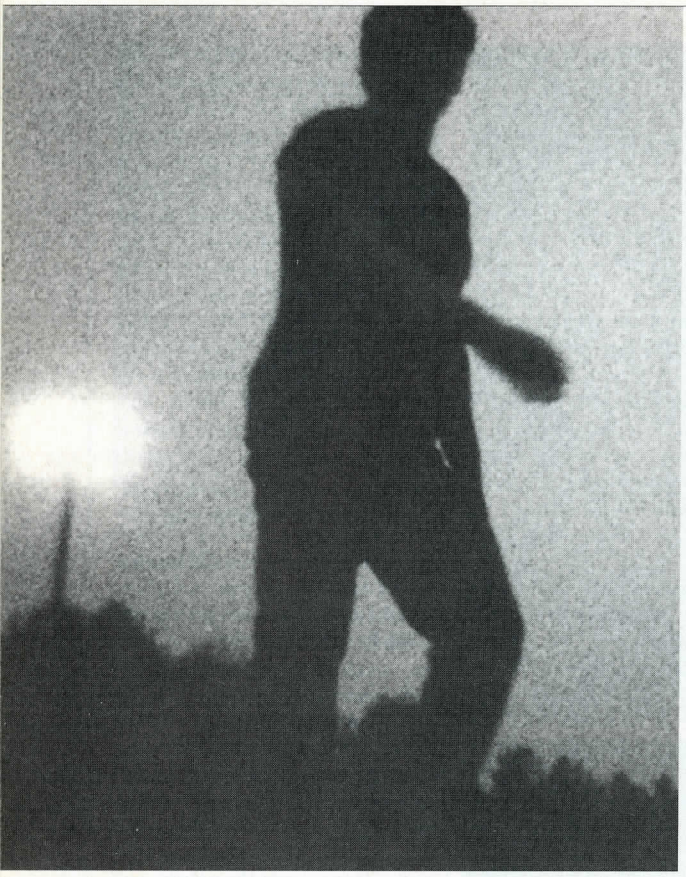
"Marry me baby we'll have a lot of fun
All I heard was no no no no
I'll be crying til the _____."

Reader Ian Henry wrote in, "As someone who thinks he can get a Bruce line in a matter of minutes, if not seconds, the fact that I can't answer this leaves me traumatized!" He was not alone. But familiarity with Springsteen recordings, even bootlegs and outtakes, wouldn't have done much good here. The answer to the toughest question in the Ultimate Quiz III is another one that's in black and white in the *Songs* book; you just had to go through the looking glass to find it. Pictured on page 229, a handwritten lyric sheet to "Gloria's Eyes" has the reverse of the page bleeding through. Hold it up to a mirror, and another title from the *Human Touch/Lucky Town* era jumps out: **"Blue Moon Turns to Gold."**

We noted the whole funhouse-mirror trick in a previous issue of *Backstreets,* which made this question a little easier, but this was still the one question that most quiz takers couldn't get. Some worthy attempts:

til the Morning Sun
til the Day is Done
til the Downing of the Sun
til the Break of Dawn
til the Kingdom Come
til the Sound of the Gun
til the End of time
til the Good is Gone
til the Summer on Signal Hill
til the River Runs Dry
til the Resurrection
til the Last Night in Texas
til the Light of Day

and, of course, til the Cows Come Home.



SEARCHIN' THROUGH THE DUST

On *The Rising*, Bruce Springsteen reports from the neighborhood he knows best and finds the light up ahead.

BY CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS

OVER THE PAST DECADE, popular music has devolved from something that affects, shapes, and molds pop culture to being a meager product of it. Much of it seems of its time; so little of it dares to address its time. Anyone who's been in a record shop lately knows that making music of lasting consequence is difficult enough in our disposable world, let alone crafting a record that focuses squarely on the aftermath of September 11. It's hard to decide, though, what is more strange: that so few major music artists felt compelled enough in the past year to capture their corner of the post-tragedy world, or that one who usually spends three or four times as long to complete a record did. For all the poets down here that don't write nothin' at all, Bruce Springsteen took a look around his neighborhood, picked up a pen and a guitar, and went to work. In the blink of an eye and in the midst of a world crisis, he completed his first album of new material since 1995, and in doing so reaffirmed the possibilities of modern rock.

Keeping a low public profile for much of the past ten years, Springsteen has been lauded in concert halls while nearly forgotten by radio, written off by hipsters, and scoffed at by cynics. But they can laugh all they want at the "power and the promise of rock 'n' roll"—the joke ain't on him this time around. Making good at last on his intentions of getting new music out quickly—and there's never been a better time for it—Bruce is back, lean and mean, in his graveyard boots with 15 new songs to sing. He's wrangled a new producer, new sounds, and some old friends: the E Street Band. And damn if it isn't just what we need to hear.

WITH *THE RISING*, SPRINGSTEEN has returned to popular consciousness, supermarket sound systems, and the *Billboard* charts with a bullet (the album spent its first two weeks at number one, and seven straight weeks in the top ten). Given the record's theme, that's no small feat: "September 11 concept album" doesn't exactly scream chart-topper. But for many shaken by the tragic events of 9/11, *The Rising* strikes a chord—not with jingoism or easy sentiment, but with a complex song cycle that encompasses hope and devastation, isolation and celebration, all in a time of an unprecedented national catastrophe. To hear some tell it, Springsteen has "risen up" like something out of legend, at a time when his country needed him most. (Hey, if Clapton is God, as a popluar scrawling in London proclaimed in the 1960s, why can't Springsteen be King Arthur?) But there's no need for hyperbole; as he sings in "Countin' on a Miracle," "there ain't no storybook story." On *The Rising*, Bruce is simply doing what he has always done best: chronicling the struggle of everyday men and women, their dreams and disappointments, in a world that can turn you hard and cold.

Springsteen excels at telling other people's stories, and as a writer, much of his power is in the ability to show us the world through another's eyes. The creative act of inhabiting a character is only part of it; what he reflects in their stories—the ways in which their fortunes rise and fall with the fate of their surroundings—is what makes his characters resonate with our own lives. From the smaller scale of "My Hometown" to the widescreen "Born in the U.S.A.," from the blue-collar devastation of "Youngstown" to the struggles of new immigrants in "Galveston Bay" and "Balboa Park," Springsteen characters have often been "caught in a crossfire," wrestling with circumstances beyond their control.

After his relationship records of the late '80s and early '90s, Springsteen resumed a closer watch on the outside world with *The Ghost of Tom Joad*. Recent events nearer to home—from the shooting death of Amadou Diallo to, most dramatically, the nightmarish terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon—have forced his writerly eye back from border towns and mesquite canyons to his own backyard. Bruce's latest portrait of the world around him, in its method, too, is far from the *I-read-the-news-today-oh-boy* reportage of *Tom Joad*. Written for an audience all too familiar with the grisly details, *The Rising* is less dependent on story-specifics than on symbolism and emotional context. There are no Franks, Bobbys or Billys here (we do get a Mary or two—it's a *Springsteen* record, after all), to say nothing of a Joe Roberts or Catherine LeFevre. At times the new album tests a listener's ability—or at least willingness—to give weight and meaning

to abstract nouns. In the universality of the songs there's a tensile strength and adaptability that should give the album staying power. But taken together at the moment, it speaks with a powerful directness. Awed by the bravery of those who gave their lives, evocative of the fear and uncertainty in the air, full of inspiration without easy answers, *The Rising* is an ambitious tracing of the aftershocks of 9/11.

"Lonesome Day" bursts out of the gate as a statement of intent, with the singer's determination to "find my way through." It's an overture that reverberates throughout the record: facing unimagined crisis and what would seem to be unbearable loss, there's no way out but through. "You gotta live it every day," he sang in "Badlands," and "keep pushin' til it's understood." That song's declaration of belief in love and faith—"that someday it may raise me"—is the same determination that runs through *The Rising*. It's how we make it through that concerns Springsteen—what we do when confronted by life-changing events and how we cope with adversity—and connects *The Rising* to themes from his previous records.

The "Nothing Man," is at risk of not making it at all—like soldiers after war in "Shut Out the Light," "Born in the U.S.A.," and "Brothers Under the Bridge," he's on a path that can lead from isolation to self-destruction. But he asks for understanding, and prays for strength. Connection, love, and community go a long way toward healing in "Mary's Place" and "Waitin' on a Sunny Day," and toward bridging gulfs in "Worlds Apart" and "Let's Be Friends." In "The Fuse," as in 1984's "Cover Me," an intimate connection can block out the pain of the world outside. When it comes to the immediate pain of loss—as in the aching "Empty Sky" and the challenge in "You're Missing" of making it from morning to evening in a changed world—it's a matter of learning to live with what you can't rise above.

One way is to take inspiration from the choices and sacrifices made in "Into the Fire" and "The Rising." Bruce's characters have stared down life's hardest choices before, in songs like "Spare Parts" and "Galveston Bay." On *The Rising*, as on September 11, those deliberate actions are writ large. They illustrate the point at which a choice driven by a sense of duty—moral, occupational, or otherwise—becomes heroism. On one hand, it's a lot for a pop song to handle. "Into the Fire" doesn't manage it completely, with some of the album's least artful lines ("walked into the darkness of your smoky grave," for one). "The Rising," an even more ambitious composition, is the masterstroke. It's the story of a fireman racing to the scene, climbing through the smoke—and *dying*—with a final vision of life and loved ones as his soul ascends... all in under five minutes of thrilling rock 'n' roll, guitar solo included. A tour de force of dynamic tension, poetic language, and vocal intensity, its greatest triumph is in meeting the agonizing subject matter with such an inspirational spirit. There may be a lump in your throat by song's end, but the only ones likely to be crying under their pillows after this one are jealous songwriters.

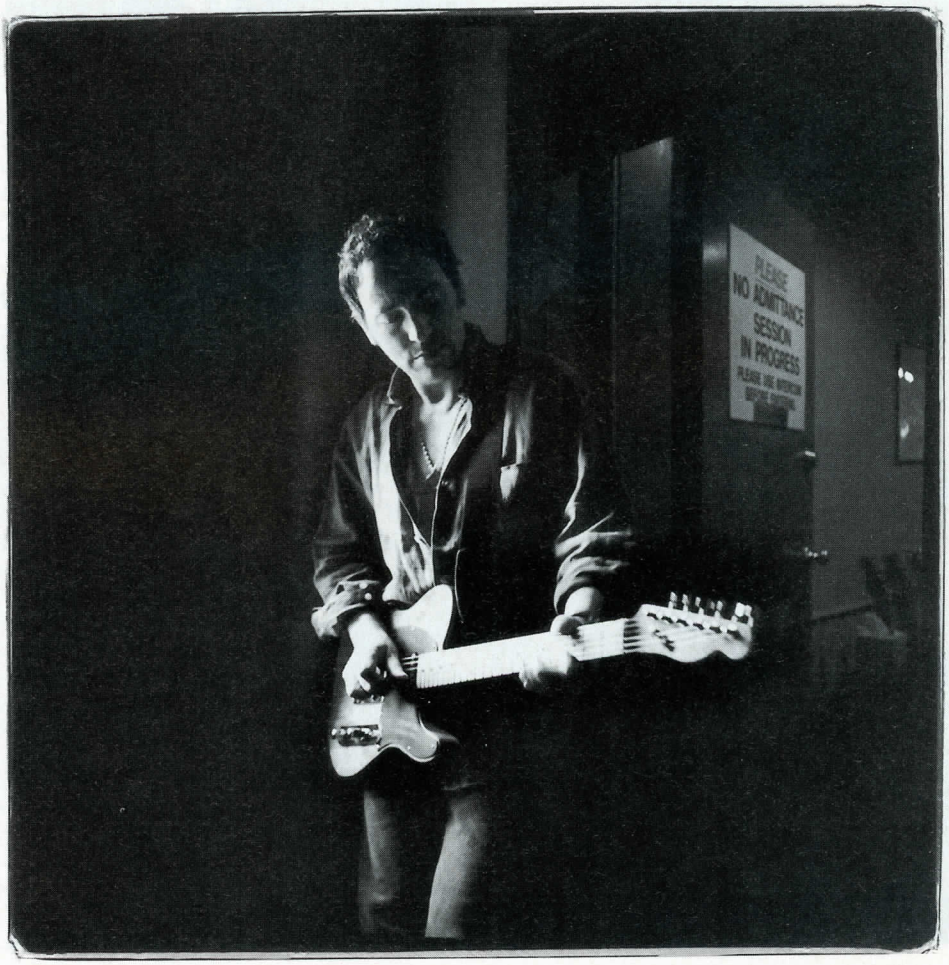
Like *Tunnel of Love*'s multifaceted portrait of marriage, the stories on *The Rising* all contribute to a larger picture, of a world living through the aftermath of tragedy. As Springsteen explained to the *New York Times*' Jon Pareles, "I'd come up with one and that would lead to another and lead to another and lead to another. Then you start to tell a story. And finally the story begins saying, 'I'd like this emotional ground covered or that emotional ground covered.' What's the rest of the story?"

With all that ground to cover, Springsteen didn't set out without a compass. He quietly reached out to a few victims' families, making calls and listening to their stories. Some details from this "research" made their way into the songs, but it's mainly evident as something to steer by in his giving expression to the bereaved and the departed. If there was any doubt, *The Rising* is evidence that Springsteen has the empathy, the good intentions, the authority, and the creative imagination to give them voice.

As much as it honors the dead, their suffering and their strength, most of *The Rising* is about the living. It is, by necessity, a survivor's record. And there's a brightness to it, musically, that transcends tragedy. For all the hope and faith in the lyrics, the optimism we feel most is in the music. He didn't get there by himself, either.

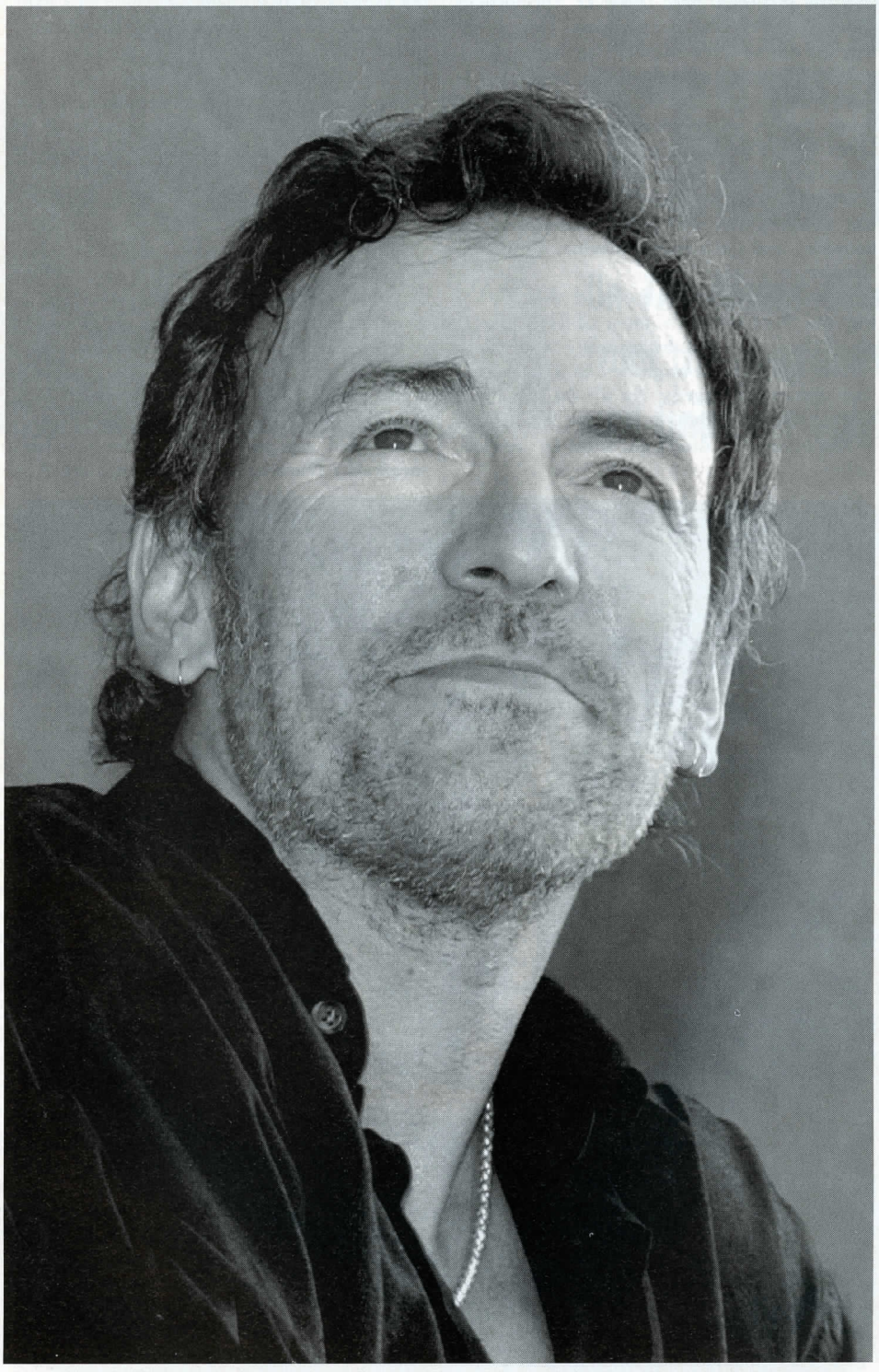
Five years after Sony chief Don Ienner proposed Brendan O'Brien as a producer, Springsteen took that significant leap of faith. Coupling O'Brien's modern production sensibility with the rededicated E Street Band, *The Rising* creates a fresh template for Springsteen's studio sound. The E Street Band has evolved, as was evident by the end of the 2000 tour, and the judicious addition of strings also colors the album from its opening notes. But while a song like "The Fuse" may stand out from a production standpoint, the transformations and musical experimentations on the album as a whole—orchestral breaks, looped drums, varied instrumentation—feel integrated in a natural way. The sound is updated but rarely contrived, crisp but rarely slick. Check out the way "Empty Sky" builds, with Roy Bittan's piano becoming more of a rhythm instrument, syncopated against Max Weinberg's drums—both their upfront *thwack* and their Spectorian flourishes in the distance—all punctuated by subtle harmonies and a muted, forlorn harp solo. It sounds old and new all at once.

That might have been a surprise for fans expecting a full-on rock record—or the guitar/organ/sax throwback sound often associated with the band—from what has been rightly billed as the first E Street Band studio record since 1984. (While the E Street Band supported Bruce on 1988's *Tunnel of Love* Express Tour, 1987's *Tunnel of Love* is essentially a Springsteen solo record with guest contributions from band members.) The rockers, such as they are, have



a new crunch, but *The Rising* does have less of a live-band feel than *Born in the U.S.A.* That fact, coupled with time needed to get the new material up to speed on the subsequent tour, suggests that *The Rising* may have more in common with *Tunnel* than reported when it came to recording live in the studio. But what the album lacks in live feel, it makes up for in an organic one.

There's also an openness to a larger musical vocabulary. Springsteen reached out to other musicians, from just around the corner—the Alliance Singers, familiar to Bruce fans from the Asbury holiday shows—to the other side of the globe. The Eastern tones that had previously crept into live performances of "Born in the U.S.A." are full-blown in "Worlds Apart." The Celtic influence on "Into the Fire" feels like a returned favor from Steve Earle. And subtler sonic touches go a long way. "Paradise," with its eerie background hum, sounds like "The Sound of Silence" recorded in the field behind the dynamo. The mournful, sliding hook of "You're Missing" makes an otherwise straightforward ballad sound like nothing else he's done. In "Waitin' on a Sunny Day," the way Max shuffle-steps right after the "drummer, girl, who can't keep a beat" line adds just the kind of playful grace note the song needs. And of course, the gospel influence has never been more prevalent on a Springsteen record (much as he seems to think "The Promised Land" was originally a gospel number). The joyous choir on "Let's Be Friends" and the down-but-not-out inspiration of "My City of Ruins" leave us with an overwhelming feeling that, well, everything's gonna be alright.



DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

As Steve Van Zandt told *Rolling Stone*, "I don't ever remember a case where everything was done so quickly, and I think that's why this record, conceptually, thematically, is so coherent." The speed with which the album was recorded didn't leave much time for outtakes. Springsteen's legendary workbook (pictured in the limited edition CD package, and perused with Ted Koppel on *Nightline*), included a few titles that never came to fruition. "Hard Drive" is one, "Harry's Place"—a completely different song than "Mary's Place"—is another. But according to Springsteen, only 17 songs were recorded, of which 15 made the album. While a few of *The Rising*'s songs have lingered in his notebooks for years ("Nothing Man," for instance, was written in '94), Van Zandt raises a good point when he says, "The biggest difference with making this record is that it's the first time that Bruce wrote a collection of songs, we went in and recorded them, and he put them out."

And if it's not perfect, if it's overlong, that's a fair trade-off for months or even years of fine-tuning that might have sapped its vitality. Fans may wish for a pruning of the lesser songs, but then again, few of us seem to agree on which songs are the lesser ones. "Mary's Place" is at the bottom of my list—a tepid rehash that feels like the result of a writing exercise. The irony is that it's a song of healing and acceptance through the power of music and community, compromised by its own lack of musical power. I could toss "Countin' on a Miracle" too, as long as we airlift that magnificent bridge. Though I've stopped minding the milquetoast '70s soul of "Let's Be Friends," I ain't feelin' it, either. Its breeziness might have let drift right off the album with no one the wiser. But I get the sense, particularly as the album settles in over time, that its absence would be felt. I may skip over "Mary's Place" six times out of seven (lucky seven is just to hear the horns), but, reluctantly, I've come to be glad it's there. Or I've at least come to understand why. *The Rising* achieves a balance—in style, substance, and story—that feels complete.

Taken together, Springsteen's latest becomes a testament to one of the great possibilities of art: its ability to convey *you are not alone* in a powerful and profound way. Like few records before it—Marvin Gaye's *What's Going On*, Neil Young's *Freedom*, and Springsteen's own *Nebraska*—*The Rising* is a distillation of the mood of a country at a very particular moment, capturing a feeling in the air. In tone and utility, if not quite in mastery, it shares the most with *What's Going On*—as an album of inspiration in an emotionally disturbing time, and for turbulent times to follow.

IDA MAE ASTUTE/ABC PHOTO

BEHIND THE SONGS

On *The Rising*, the devil is in the mailbox, on the horizon line, *and* in the details.

Who is the Nothing Man? How did an ISDN line connect two worlds on "Worlds Apart"? "Plastics, wire and your kiss" doesn't refer to orthodontia, does it? And while we're on "Paradise," why are we suddenly in Virginia, and what the hell's going on at the end of the song? Springsteen has talked more specifically about *The Rising* and its individual songs than he has about any other new album in his career—discussing when songs were written, what he was thinking at the time, how the record was assembled, and even spelling out the end of "Paradise." We've scoured recent interviews, liner notes, and Bruce's past work, for a song-by-song look at the parts that make up *The Rising*'s whole.

BY ANDREW E. MASSIMINO AND CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS

1. LONESOME DAY

A song of betrayal and hope that sets a tone more than it tells a story. It's obvious that the narrator's relationship has gone sour—the oral-sex imagery in the last verse deftly spells that out—but the crux of the song is found in its choruses of "It's alright, it's alright, it's alright." Sure there's trouble, but you'd never know it from the upbeat tempo and arrangement. What is clear is a determination to persevere that echoes throughout *The Rising*—"it's gonna be okay, if I can just get through this lonesome day." According to *Uncut* magazine's Adam Sweeting, this song was indeed "conceived as a curtain-raiser and scene-setter for what follows," and that's true musically as well as thematically: strings abound from the opening notes, establishing a new sonic direction for Springsteen and the E Streeters' post-rededication work.

BRUCE SAYS: "If you look at the first verse, it feels like a guy who's talking to his girl.... Then bang, the second verse, I switched right out of this personal thing to this sort of overall emotional mood and the feelings that were in the air here in the States around that time. But it works, because one thing works with the other and the second verse can actually come in on what was said in the first verse. The secret of the songwriting was to get personal first, then you sort of shade in universal feelings. That's what balances the songs." [1]

SPECIAL GUESTS: Making up the string section on "Lonesome Day" are Larry LeMaster and Jere Flint both on cello, and Soozie Tyrell on violin and background vocals. LeMaster and Flint are both active in the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra; Flint conducted on R.E.M's *Up*. Tyrell, who contributed to *The Ghost of Tom Joad* and guested on the last two tours, is now a member of the E Street Band. Present from the very beginning of *The Rising* proceedings, she appears on ten of the album's 15 tracks—everything except "Nothing Man," "Countin' on a Miracle," "Empty Sky," "Further On (Up the Road)," and "Paradise."

LYRIC CROSS-CHECK: "The joke's on me, but it's gonna be okay" brings to mind "There's a joke here somewhere and it's on me" from "Dancing in the Dark."

2. INTO THE FIRE

"I need your kiss, but love and duty called you someplace higher." That one line establishes the starting point for delving into the details and dealing with the tragedy of 9/11. One of the more literal songs on the record, it was inspired by the bravery of firemen and rescue workers climbing up when others were coming down, and it provides a base for the thematic proceedings. The song is part of a balance that Springsteen developed "very instinctively" on *The Rising*: "On some songs I was gonna be more literal than on others. Those songs kind of anchored the theme of the record, so when you get to the other ones you start to look into it and check the verses and realize it's a piece of the whole thing." [1]

TIMELINE: Written along with "You're Missing" shortly after 9/11, in "the second or third week of September," and specifically for the *America: A Tribute to Heroes* telethon. Springsteen originally planned to sing it for that event, but opted for "My City of Ruins" instead.

BRUCE SAYS: "I remember when we first went down to Georgia to record, the first song we did was 'Into the Fire.' We practiced it maybe three times, and then Brendan said, 'OK, come on in, let's do it.' And when he played us back that song, I heard something I hadn't heard before: I heard the way we sound right now. Today. And I said, 'Well, that's what we need to do.' " [2]

BRUCE SAYS II: "When we got that song down, it brought the whole thing home immediately, because what you get on that song, the first verse is the blues.... That's country blues. I'm doubling my voice around a twelve-string guitar, so when you hear the beginning of that thing, you hear a spirit out of the past. Then, when the chorus hits, that's the gospel. The pump organ comes in. That's where the thing lifts and makes sense of the first verse and, hopefully, tries to make sense of the experience itself. And my best songs have done both of those things, blues and gospel.... When the drums hit on 'Into the Fire,' it comes down, and the whole thing just grounds itself into the earth and starts fightin', you know? The gospel and the blues." [1]

LYRIC CROSS-CHECK: The chorus that reads like a prayer—beckoning strength, faith, hope and love from their own examples—has a few common-language predecessors in the Springsteen canon, most notably from "Badlands": "I believe in the love that you gave me/I believe in the

faith that can save me/I believe in the hope and I pray that some day it may raise me..."

SPECIAL GUESTS: Features Jane Scarpantoni, a classically trained cellist, who has played with numerous "alternative" artists (like Bob Mould, Lori Carson, and R.E.M.), and performed on *MTV Unplugged* with both Nirvana and 10,000 Maniacs. Producer Brendan O'Brien also guests on hurdy gurdy (a crank-driven instrument) and glockenspiel.

3. WAITIN' ON A SUNNY DAY

A "Hungry Heart"-style pop song that Springsteen describes as "a little Phil Spector and a little Rockpile." (Rockpile was a "supergroup" featuring Nick Lowe and Dave Edmunds; check out songs like "Now and Always" and "When I Write a Book" from their 1980 *Seconds to Pleasure* album.) Clarence not only gets a song-ending solo, but his "oompah" sax fills throughout guide "Waitin'" happily along.

TIMELINE: Written in the spring of 1999, and rehearsed at soundcheck on the European leg of the tour, as at the 6/13/99 show in Leipzig, Germany.

BRUCE SAYS: "'Waitin' on a Sunny Day' I had written already. You know, I wrote that during the last tour. The way that I was writing, that you could read the lyrics and say, well this could be about this, or this could be about whatever you're going through personally at that moment—that was intentional. So those songs slipped pretty well into the body of work I had created after the 11th." [8]

ALTERNATE VERSION: In 1999, the soundchecked arrangement was piano-led, with a different structure to the song. The "hard times" stanza that now closes the song was the second verse, and the "without you" verse was the basis for a bridge that was later dropped.

SPECIAL GUESTS: Brendan O'Brien on glockenspiel (as on "Into the Fire") and orchestra bells. Springsteen describes O'Brien's frame of mind: "He was going, 'I'm doing a Springsteen record! Damn right I'm gonna play the glockenspiel.'"

LYRIC CROSS-CHECK: The "sweet summer breeze" in the first verse casually recalls the "first breeze of summer" from "Leap of Faith." And the "without you" verses ("I'm half a party in a one-dog town," etc.) capture the sentiment of—what else—"Without You" from the *Greatest Hits* recording sessions. "I'm helpless, darlin', without you, without you, without you."

4. NOTHING MAN

A chilling character-based ballad in the vein of *The Ghost of Tom Joad* and "Streets of Philadelpha," a survivor's tale of a man isolated by a life-changing experience. Like "Shut Out the Light," "Nothing Man" contrasts a hero's welcome with an internal struggle and search for real understanding. The post-traumatic stress disorder blues.

TIMELINE: In the context of *The Rising*, the character can easily be interpreted as a police officer, firefighter, or rescue-worker post-9/11, but the song was written earlier. Bruce came up with this one in 1994, around the *Tom Joad* period, and recorded it as a demo. That demo was among a batch of existing songs that Springsteen played for O'Brien at the beginning of their collaborative process to let him start thinking about things. According to Robert Hilburn, O'Brien particularly liked this one.

BRUCE SAYS: "You'd think it was written along with the new songs I had written.... I think it was originally written as a soldier's song when I wrote it many, many years ago. It was someone who survived a very catastrophic and transforming experience, returning home and going back to his family and his neighborhood, where others haven't had that experience. It was that one line, 'the sky's still the same unbelievable blue.' Well how can that be? How can things remain unchanged, because I've changed so much? And he's looking for somebody who just understands that. That's why, 'with this kiss, say you understand...' That's all. He just wants to hear somebody say, hey, I understand where you've been or what you're doing. [8]

WHAT'S IN A NAME: This song shares its title with a Jim Thompson novel, *The Nothing Man*. Another Springsteen song written around the same time, "My Best Was Never Good Enough," was inspired by Thompson's *The Killer Inside Me*.

LYRIC CROSS-CHECK: A couple decades earlier, "Well darlin', can you understand / The way that they will turn a man / Into a stranger to waste away..." (from "Jackson Cage") mines the same vein as "Say you understand / I am, the nothing man."

THE BREAKDOWN: The "pink vapor" that changed the character's life is open to interpretation—some see it as the spray from a bullet wound, or the air at Ground Zero. Assuming Springsteen retouched the original lyrics from '94, the source could well have been a 9/12/01 front-page *Wall Street Journal* article by John Bussey ("The Eye of the Storm: One Man's Journey Through Desperation and Chaos") not for the faint of heart. Bussey described bodies falling from the World Trade Center: "After the 80-floor drop, the impact left small puffs of pink and red vapor drifting at ground level."

The "pearl and silver" on the nightstand is a gun, reminiscent of the "gold-plated snub-nose .32" giving "comfort" in "Murder Incorporated." What remains ambiguous is whether the Nothing Man prays for the courage to pull the trigger or to refrain from doing so.

5. COUNTIN' ON A MIRACLE

A mid-tempo rocker straightforward enough for Little Steven to work it into his "Underground Garage" radio show, where the song had its world premiere. But lurking among its Bon Jovi trappings are some of the more interesting arrangements on the album—a lushly orchestrated string break, followed by a bridge with Roy Orbison/Phil Spector feel. Strength, hope, faith and love, fresh from an appearance in "Into the Fire," wander over and turn up in the bridge, which also borrows much from Springsteen's own "Lift Me Up."

ALTERNATE VERSION: After the *Rising* concerts, a black-and-white film has been shown on the video screens of Springsteen, hair slicked back, casually performing an *Oh Brother, Where Art Thou* version of "Countin'." With Bruce on bottleneck slide and using a hillbilly falsetto, the song is completely rearranged, even incorporating a different melody.

MY LOVER MAN: While many of the songs on *The Rising* could go either way, "Countin' on a Miracle" is written expressly from a woman's point of view. She contrasts herself with Sleeping Beauty, whose lover woke her with a kiss, while her own lover's kiss "was taken" from her: "There's no prince to break the spell," and her "king is lost."

THE BREAKDOWN: In the context of *The Rising*, and written post-9/11, "Countin' on a Miracle" evokes the many survivors hoping against the inevitable in the days and weeks following the tragedy, waiting for loved ones to be found. The song however, conjures up a metaphorical search for something more intangible. Underneath the obvious fairytale tropes is an unusual look at faith, from the point of view of a pragmatist and a skeptic, who has never had faith—or at least needed it—until now. With her lover gone and the fairytale over, she attempts to reconcile her prior beliefs with her need to believe in *something*: "I don't believe in magic, but for you I will." She chooses to lift her life towards what she does know—the entire presence of her lover's life, and the heaven she keeps for him in her heart.

LYRIC CROSS-CHECK: "There's no prince to break the spell... My king is lost at midnight" recalls similar imagery from a decade earlier in "Gloria's Eyes": "I was your Prince Charming, king on a white horse, now look how far I've fallen." Meanwhile, "If I'm gonna believe / I'll put my faith / Darlin' in you" brings to mind this sentiment, also from *Human Touch*: "I still got a little faith / But what I need is some proof tonight / I'm lookin' for it in your eyes" ("Real World").

SPECIAL GUESTS: The Nashville String Machine (seven violins, four violas, four cellos, arranged by Ricky Keller) appears on this one, recorded at The Sound Kitchen, in Franklin, TN. This session took place when Bruce and Brendan flew to Nashville in the producer's Cessna in mid-March. According to *The Tennessean*, Sound Kitchen general manager Jennifer Rose "had been courting Brendan to do work there for many months."

6. EMPTY SKY

A song inspired by Springsteen's own experience of 9/11, what made the reality of the day's events hit home for him. "We're about five minutes from a bridge that you cross over where these two rivers meet," he told *Uncut*, "and there's a bridge where the Twin Towers stand right in the center of it, and it's only 10 or 15 miles by water from here, so it's quite close." Driving across that bridge near home, and experiencing the change first-hand, is reflected in "Empty Sky."

BRUCE SAYS: "I must have seen those towers a thousand times from the bridge.... I spent most of Sept. 11 in front of the television like everybody else, watching those pictures of the tow-

IDA MAE ASTUTE/ABC PHOTO
SPRINGSTEEN PERFORMS "EMPTY SKY" ON ABC

ers collapsing over and over, but it all didn't really hit home until I took a ride across the bridge and there was nothing where the towers used to be. The real world, I guess, is always more dramatic than something on television." [5]
SPECIAL GUESTS: Brendan O'Brien on hurdy gurdy.
THE BREAKDOWN: The "plains of Jordan" alludes to an Old Testament story, suggesting that this eye-for-an-eye thirst for vengeance is a sinful act, a turning away from God. In the book of Genesis, Abraham gave his nephew, Lot, the first choice of land they were to divide between them. Lot's choosing of the "well-watered plains of Jordan" represented a covetous choice by worldly values rather than by faith. The remaining land, then promised by God to Abraham, became... yep, the Promised Land.

7. WORLDS APART

Underneath the qawwali twist is a "Murder Incorporated"-style rocker, with a bridge that's among the record's finest moments. This story of two lovers fighting to cross the chasm of different cultures bears one of the most powerful lines on *The Rising*: "May the living let us in, before the dead tear us apart." Springsteen achieves the much-needed weight of universality and world-scope by simply mentioning Allah in the second verse, and closes with a simple plea to give love a chance. As Springsteen told *USA Today*, "(This song is) a mixture of a relationship song and one about cultures coming together.... As I got to a certain point, I realized I had written a lot from the perspective of someone inside America, which is something I always do naturally. And I thought, well, I really need something that connects the world to this in some fashion." [7]
SPECIAL GUESTS: From Pakistan, qawwali musicians Asif Ali Khan and Group. Asif is the nephew of the late Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan; in addition to vocals his group of ten fellow musicians played tabla and harmonium for this song. Also involved here is old friend Chuck Plotkin, who recorded the group at Hensen Recording Studios in L.A., connected to the Atlanta studio through an ISDN link. A little modern technology for this Old World rocker.
BRUCE SAYS: "I think the song started when I saw a picture of the women in Afghanistan with the veils off a few days after they'd routed the Taliban out of Kabul, and their faces were so beautiful." [1]
BRUCE SAYS II: "When I wrote ['Worlds Apart"], I already had some Eastern tones and scales in it because that's where the lyric was going. And I left a space for a certain range of singing, I knew what it was, but I didn't know how to get it. We started to look around, and by happenstance, Asif Ali Khan and his group were in Los Angeles, which was a real stroke of luck, because it was right toward the end of the record. And they came in the studio one day and they just sang really beautifully on the song and added tremendously to the breadth of the record, and it was very exciting." [8]
LYRIC CROSS-CHECK: The opening line, "I hold you in my arms," is the same line that begins "Brilliant Disguise."

8. LET'S BE FRIENDS (SKIN TO SKIN)

For all the R&B aspirations of *Human Touch*, "Let's Be Friends" is the closest Bruce has come on record to feel-good '70s soul... even when he was recording in the '70s. Reportedly the last song added to *The Rising*'s line-up—and placed directly in the center of the record—it gives the listener a four-minute break from the album's heavier themes. A simple frothy come-on song in one sense (with the understood "Let's be *more than* friends"), it also lends itself to interpretation as a gentle plea for racial and cultural harmony. With talk of tearing down walls and letting the past be history—as well as not knowing "when this chance might come again"—this song has reminded some of the good things that came of the 9/11 tragedy, the we're-all-in-this-together feeling of different cultures united.
BRUCE SAYS: "A combination of Sly Stone and Virginia beach music. Yeah, that's a nice groove, it's like a kids' singalong. What really makes it work is the Alliance Choir who are singing on it along with Patti and Soozie Tyrell. When the chorus hits, it's just a very classic sound." [1]
SPECIAL GUESTS: Six vocalists make up the Alliance Singers, a group that performed with Springsteen at the 2001 Holiday Shows in Asbury Park. Soloist Michelle Moore shines on this one. Also getting credit here is Toby Scott, for the original track and additional recording done at Thrill Hill Studios. (Scott is thanked in the liner notes for his "hard work and dedication on our pre-production.")

9. FURTHER ON (UP THE ROAD)

The most straightforward, guitar-driven rocker on the album was one of the first songs O'Brien heard—Springsteen initially played him demos of this and "Nothing Man" to give a general sense of direction. Fans heard this one early, too—along with "My City of Ruins," this was one of two *Rising* songs that had been performed live prior to recording. In the third verse, with the narrator doing his searching out in the desert, we might be witnessing Springsteen's process for rededication and the rediscovery of his rock voice.
TIMELINE: Written toward the end of the 1999-2000 tour. Springsteen opened the June 4, 2000, show in Atlanta with the premiere of the song, and played it at seven out of the ten shows on the tour-closing stand in New York City.
BEST-LAID PLANS: Other songs contemporaneous with "Further On (Up the Road)" include "American Skin (41 Shots)," "Code of Silence," and "Another Thin Line." In April of 2001, Springsteen talked about his plans for a new record, just starting to get underway: "We've done some recording. We recorded for a weekend just to get our feet wet in the studio again with the band, and we're going to come up with a studio version [of 'American Skin'] slightly different than the live version. And then I've got some other songs that we played towards the end of the tour that we're starting to record.... I'm not sure what the album is going to be yet, but just getting to work on it.... I have quite a bit of material—hopefully I've got at least half of it, songwriting-wise." Everything changed a few months later, and "Further On (Up the Road)" is the only 2000 tour song to make the record.

STRAIGHT FROM THE BOSS' MOUTH

An Oral History of The Rising

GETTING THIS THING STARTED

"I was having a hard time locating my rock voice. I knew I didn't want it to be what it was.... I'd made some records over the past years, I made one in '94 that I didn't release. Then I made a series of demos, kind of in search of that voice. And I was having a hard time finding it. And there was a point I said: 'Well, gee, maybe I just don't do that now. Maybe that's something that I did.' " [4]

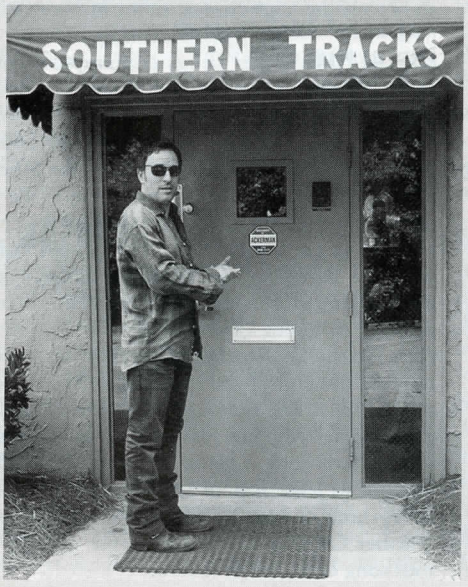
THE REUNION TOUR BRINGS IT ALL BACK HOME

"Outside of the ego gratification of thousands chanting your name, and screaming for you.... It's also something where you go, 'Man, I spent a long time learning how to do this really well, and am I just going to say that's not for me? I don't think so.'.... And then on the tour I wrote a couple of songs, 'Land of Hope and Dreams' and 'American Skin,' and these were as good as any songs like this that I've ever written. It was like, there's that voice I was looking for." [4]

"After the tour, I'd recorded with the E Street Band for a couple of weekends in the studio. Everybody sounded great, but it wasn't quite what I felt was gonna be called for if I was gonna make a record with the band again. I felt it had to live up to the history of work we'd done, and I knew I didn't know how to do that...." [1]

ON SEPTEMBER 11

"I was at breakfast. I was at the kitchen table having some breakfast. I was by myself and someone came in and said planes hit the World Trade Center. So I went in—went into the living room and turned the television on, right before the second plane hit. And then the rest of the day, we were just sitting there with whoever came over and whoever was there and just watching.... it was mainly just a day of just gathering of your neighbors and friends and people, just wondering what was to come." [9]



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SOUTHERN TRACKS STUDIO

"The atmosphere in the days after September 11 felt like it must have during wartime—the uncertainty and the anxiety and the concern. I don't think anyone will ever forget it, particularly here in New Jersey. The local communities were hit pretty hard. There were 150-plus casualties from Monmouth County alone. You would drive by the church every day and there was another funeral." [5]

"I didn't set out to write a 9/11 album. I didn't want to write literally about what happened, but the emotions in the air. In the purest sense, that's what a songwriter does." [5]

"What you were thinking and the way you were writing was contextualized by new experiences and by the experiences that everyone had on that day.... The songs just emotionally came out." [3]

"This was one of those moments when the years that I've put in and the relationships that I've developed and nurtured with my audience—this was one of those times when people want to see you." [6]

WRITING THE RISING

"The songs came very quickly. I think there was so much going on that was both shocking and troubling, inspirational, uplifting, incredibly despairing, there was just so much going on emotionally. You go for the familiar comforts of craft, music, poetry.... things that reflect that humanity. That's why people go to the arts during times like these, I think. They need to feel that those things are still there, that they exist. They need to hear them and see them. They become very necessary, I think: your favorite song, film, a work of art, a piece of poetry that helps ground you and makes you feel safe in some fashion, or at least gives you a sense of where you are. So I think that most artists are in the process of trying to do that for themselves. And I was certainly taking my refuge in those skills. And then hopefully it's a service that you provide the audience." [8]

"The first songs I wrote were 'Into the Fire' and 'You're Missing.' I wrote those shortly after the 11th, because we got asked to do a telethon here in the States. They were the beginning of a lot of the real writing I did for the record. It was just one of those moments when everything changed... no one really understood what had happened or what could happen, and so I think I was just sitting down to just sort of ask 'Okay, well, what do I do now?' What do you say now? How has your dialog with your audience changed? What do they need? What do you need to say?" [8]

"The difference was that on this record, you're writing about something that everyone saw and had some experience with, and obviously some people experienced it much more intimately." [6]

"With the exception of two or three songs that I had already, the body of the record was probably written between September and... we finished up in May—about five or six months. The songwriting itself was not time-consuming. The songs formed themselves pretty quickly and I had a process where I'd demo them pretty fast because I have a studio set up... and it enabled me to see if it was a good song. That really helped me weed through a lot of different ideas I had. But the songs were written quickly." [1]

"When you're putting yourself into shoes you haven't worn, you have to be very... just very thoughtful, is the way that I'd put it. Just thoughtful. You call on your craft, and you go searching for it, and hopefully what makes people listen is that over the years you've been serious and honest. That's where your creative authority comes from. That's how people know you're not just taking a ride." [6]

"It was important to find the right tone, to find an emotional context that felt real to me post the 11th.... There was less directness, often less of a literal story line, than I had used before in some of my writing. You can read different meanings into the songs. I wanted people to be able to use the music how it suited them." [7]

IN THE STUDIO

"The sounds of records change every five years or so—the technology, the amps they use. And my production ability, it just wasn't current enough." [2]

"I said I can't do justice to the band at this point by producing this thing myself or with Jon [Landau], so we said let's meet some other people. We knew we'd do a fine job on our own if we had to, but let's meet some other people and see what their ideas are.... I'd heard Brendan [O'Brien]'s records in the mid-'90s, and they were just powerful rock records, y'know, like Pearl Jam. I just thought they sounded really good, I'd probably been thinking about working with somebody else for five or so years. [1]

"Brendan had all my references so I could refer back to something from 1966 or 1980. And then he had the following ten and 20 years." [4]

"Really, it just came down to, 'We'd like to record some good songs if we can and we'd like it to be exciting,' and basically he said 'Yeah.' He said, 'I have a studio down south and I like to work there, but I can work anywhere,' so I said, 'Let's work where you work and where you're comfortable.' We made a date.... Brendan is a musician himself, he's very musical and had a lot of good ideas, so we went down south to Georgia and went into the studio." [1]

"I wanted to capture the spirit and passion of our playing, but to make it sound different than any other record we've made. So I needed new ears.... I can't overemphasize how inspirational Brendan [O'Brien] was. We experimented a lot, and he got a combination of exciting sonic textures while still keeping the warmth." [7]

"I trusted his viewpoint very intensely, and I had a lot of faith in where he thought the thing was going to go soundwise. The guitars were brought way up front, the keyboards were put in a different spot, things sounded a little different. We used a variety of different tape loops, and we had a lot of different found sounds going on—everything to sort of not go to the normal thing that we'd done in the past. The essential thing was to get the band to feel sonically fresh. He knew exactly what to do there, so I got to kind of sit back and do the singing and the playing and the songwriting." [1]

"The selection of songs was not so tricky. We only cut 17 songs, we put 15 of them out. That's usually rare. We usually have a lot of outtakes, but not this time. And then the sequencing, it goes basically chronologically, some earliest stuff I wrote, middle stuff I wrote, and sort of the last stuff I wrote. Not specifically in every case, but if you follow the record, it's pretty much the way the record was written, that was just the way the emotional story line fell very naturally in that fashion." [8]

OUT INTO THE WORLD

"It's a real rock record. You know, it's loud and noisy.... it's very musical, one of the most musical records I've made. It's basically bright, you know, major keys. And I've often told other people that if somebody who's just speaking about the record, they're not going to know what the record sounds like. Because the literal aspect of the record is where I dealt with these subjects, whereas the musical aspect of the record is where I dealt with the inspiration and the hopefulness, and light and brightness. And so you can get a bit of a misinterpretation by just kind of hearing me talk about it. Yeah, the record is actually quite bright... it's exciting, and musically, it's just fun." [8]

"I think it's important to move around as an artist to stay alive creatively. You can't just sit in one spot for 30 years. There is a time when you want to get back to the center of what you do, however, and that's what we've done with this record. It's more about writing with a little more about the world outside in mind. This is a tough city and a tough country, and they'll both be all right. I felt a lot of anxiety in the air after 9/11, but I also felt a lot of optimism and faith and spirit. That's what I wanted to capture in the album." [5]

"I believe this is one of my very best records. I feel down in my soul that it's as good as any record I've made with the band. I feel like I did my job, and I don't know the way that radio responds, and I'm not comfortable with a lot of the ways that music is disseminated at the moment. I've got a working band, we're gonna go out and we're gonna work very hard playing, and we're gonna play this record every night. I'll do my best to help it find a home and a place in the world, and then let the chips fall where they may." [1]

10. THE FUSE

The Rising's most noticeable production departure is "The Fuse"—Springsteen describes it as "really sonically different for us"—with a drum loop, multi-tracked vocals, echo effects, and an attention-grabbing drop-out. But the subject matter, about shutting out a harsh world with a little of that human touch, revisits a hit from 1984: "Turn out the light, bolt the door... I've seen enough I don't want to see any more... cover me."

TIMELINE: Written shortly after "Into the Fire" and "You're Missing." According to Jon Pareles, Springsteen referred to those two initial 9/11 songs as "genesis" songs, in that they led to others that filled in more of the "story" that needed telling. As he told Pareles, "After ['Into the Fire' and 'You're Missing'] I woke up one night and I had this song, 'The Fuse,' and so all of a sudden you have elements of the story you're compelled to tell at a certain moment. That you're kind of *asked* to tell. Then you look at it and listen to it and it begins to say, y'know, there's just a wide variety of emotional elements to make it thoughtful and complete, and the songs kind of present themselves as such and in that fashion." [1]

THE BREAKDOWN: The "long black line of cars snakin' slow through town" in the first verse soon becomes a "long black line in front of Holy Cross" in the second. This concrete image of a funeral procession grounds the other general impressions of dread to suggest a time of both mourning and fear of the sort that followed the 9/11 tragedy. The part of the story that "The Fuse" fills in is why there are war-babies: a natural way of coping with such times of struggle is by making a real connection through sex. It's about finding someone that you trust, then getting out of the way to allow for that sexual healing.

LYRIC CROSS-CHECK: "Down at the courthouse they're ringin' the flag down" bears strong resemblance to "They're all sittin' down at the courthouse waiting for 'em to take the flag down" ("Frankie"). In fact, that entire second verse of "Frankie" bears similarities: while "everybody's dyin'" and there are "strange flashes in the sky," the singer just wants to "spend the night at the drive-in" with his gal.

11. MARY'S PLACE

Ostensibly hearkening back to Springsteen's showstoppers from the early '70s—and owing as much of a debt to Van Morrison as those early Springsteen songs did—"Mary's Place" feels more belabored and derivative than a party song should. But its underlying weariness also points to the fact that this isn't a regular party—it's a *wake*, celebrating the life of a departed soul.

BRUCE SAYS: " [After 9/11] people were making that effort to celebrate, and it was helpful. The idea of the song was to capture that thing. I really wanted it to feel like home. It's a throwback to 'Rosalita' almost, and I wanted the band to feel the way people remembered that it felt at a certain time and I was singing a certain way. It comes up about three-quarters of the way through the record... and all of a sudden people would feel like, hey, that's your own pals putting their arms around you and you've got a place to go and somebody to talk to and be with.... The record needed to be filled with a certain sort of hopeful energy, but the hope had to be *earned*, y'know? It couldn't just be platitudes of 'Everything's gonna be all right' or 'Things are gonna be better.' So if you look at a song like 'Mary's Place'—*'We're gonna have a party.'* Then you go back to the verses and see all the other stuff is in the verses, somebody trying to sort through what happened, and 'What's my place and where do I go tonight and how do I deal with this minute by minute and day by day?' " [1]

LYRIC CROSS-CHECK: "I got a picture of you in my locket" borrows an image from "All That Heaven Will Allow," but the most notable cross-reference here is another writer's song, Sam Cooke's "Meet Me at Mary's Place." Sure, in Cooke's chorus, "We're gonna have us a ball today," as opposed to "We're gonna have a party," but the lyrical similarity is striking. With Bruce being a big Cooke fan, it's hard to imagine this as a coincidence, and it also feels like more than an homage. How about this scenario: Springsteen's narrator celebrates the life of her lost love by playing his favorite music: "Your favorite record's on the turntable/I drop the needle and pray." What's that favorite record? "Meet Me at Mary's Place," by Sam Cooke.

WHO IS MARY? PART 1: "Yeah, I've used that name a lot of times. I'm sure it's the Catholic coming out in me, y'know? That was always the most beautiful name. I used it in 'Thunder Road,' I used it on *Tom Joad*... it's not necessarily the same person, and there's a little continuum that occurs for the people who are watching or listening. The name drifts through your body of work and leaves a trail of its own about where you've been and where you're going." [1]

SPECIAL GUESTS: Scarpantoni and the Alliance Singers return for this one, along with the horn section of Mark Pender, Mike Spengler, Richie "La Bamba" Rosenberg, Jerry Vivino, and Ed Manion. Who better to have a party with than the Horns of Love? Other than Vivino, in for Mario Cruz, these are the same guys who toured with the E Street Band back in 1988, and names also familiar from the Asbury Jukes, the Max Weinberg 7, and Springsteen's recent holiday shows in Asbury Park.

12. YOU'RE MISSING

Combining simple, evocative imagery of loss with a mournful hook, it's Springsteen's most devastatingly moving combination of words and music since "Streets of Philadelphia." It builds to a wordless climax, Danny's masterful organ solo that, following "I got dust on my shoes, nothing but teardrops," speaks volumes.

TIMELINE: Written, along with "Into the Fire," between September 11 and the September 21 telethon.

GENESIS OF A "GENESIS SONG": According to *Rolling*

WHEELS OF FIRE
BY PHILIP HAUSLER

WHEN I READ THE LYRICS to "The Rising" for the first time, I was so moved by how hauntingly Bruce captured the firefighter's job, including the optimism, fear, confusion, faith, and hope. As a volunteer firefighter from Kinnelon, New Jersey, I thought I'd clarify a couple of points.

The "60-pound stone" Bruce refers to is an air cylinder and harness that is part of a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). It's pretty heavy and bulky. Full turnout gear, including SCBA, boots, bunker pants, coat, and helmet, weighs around 50 pounds.

The "chain that binds me" and the "half mile of line" both refer to hose. Hose is usually carried into a building on the firefighter's shoulders in a line. Thus, the hose serves as "chain that binds" one firefighter to another. The importance of the hose cannot be overstated to a firefighter. Obviously, it provides the water to attack the fire, but in a fire incident, it is the lifeblood of the team. When entering a building, each person on the hose has a clear role and responsibility. If you are on the hose, you have an immediate sense of where you are. When leaving a building, especially in an emergency situation, the hose can be followed out to safety. For high rises and other tall structures, hose is often carried in rolls by individual firefighters; however, Bruce is not describing that here.

The "cross of my calling" is the international insignia of the fire service, the Cross Pattee-Nowy, otherwise known as the Maltese Cross. It is a badge of courage and honor that symbolizes a firefighter's willingness to risk his or her life to save others from the ravages of fire. The fire service borrows the cross from the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem, a charitable, non-military organization that existed during the 11th and 12th centuries. Look closely next time you see a firefighter wearing a dark blue tee-shirt representing his or her fire department—over the firefighter's heart is usually a Maltese Cross.

I have taped the lyrics, along with a photo of the FDNY from 9/11, on the wall behind my turnout gear. Every time I go on a call and pull down my coat from the hook on the wall, I tap the picture and lyrics, and say a short prayer before heading out.

Philip Hausler is a director for IBM Global Services and is a volunteer firefighter in his hometown of Kinnelon, NJ. He is married to his wife Therese and is the father of four children, Emily, Chris, Katie, and Timmy, all of whom are big Bruce fans.

Stone, this song was "built around a melody Springsteen worked up one night while messing around on the piano with Patti and the kids." After the song was written, when O'Brien was meeting with Bruce in New Jersey, a demo for this song became their first collaboration before they actually entered the studio in Atlanta. As Springsteen told *Uncut*: "...I had 'You're Missing,' and together we demo'd that and we worked together. It was something I hadn't done in a long time, to really collaborate over the structure and creation of one of my songs—I was used to doing all that myself...." [1]

BRUCE SAYS: "At one point Brendan said, 'Well, I think we should find another chord for this spot.' I said, 'Find another chord?! Wait a minute, now! Hold on, hold on!... Those are the chords!' But then I'm thinking that my job now as the producee is to say yes. So I said okay, we changed it, and it sounded good. Once I got comfortable with that, it was like, 'Go, man, go.' By the end of the day, we had a real nice demo." [2]

BRUCE SAYS II: "Loss is about what you miss. You miss a person's physical being—their skin, their hair, the way they smell, the way they make you feel. You miss their body. When my father died, my children wanted to touch him, to touch his body. And the kids got something out of it. The people in this situation, you know, they aren't going to get that." [6]

SPECIAL GUESTS: The Nashville String Machine, along with ASO cellists LeMaster and Flint.

LYRIC CROSS-CHECK: "Shirt's in the closet, shoes in the hall... Everything is everything / But you're missing" seems to be re-fashioned from another Springsteen song with a very similar title: "Jacket hung on the chair, the way I left it last night / Everything was in place, everything seemed alright / But you were missing" ("Missing").

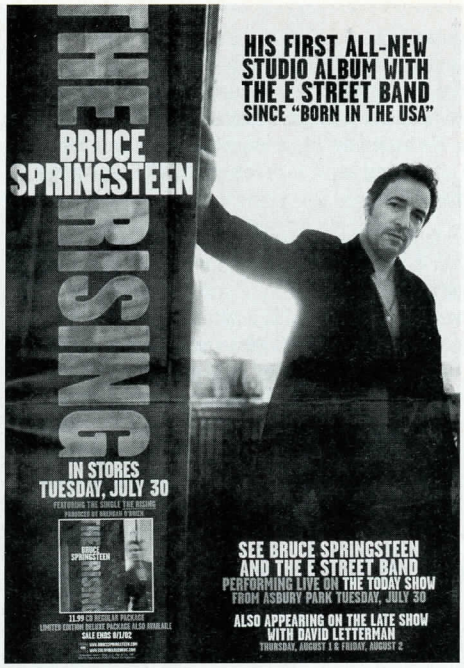
13. THE RISING

"The sacrifices were so great, so great on that day that you had to be just in awe of it," Springsteen said in a recent interview, "just in awe of that kind of dedication and service, courage, and bravery it took to go into those buildings and go up when everybody else was going down, you know?" That awe came out in the songwriting process in two songs in particular, "Into the Fire" and this one, which Springsteen positions in relation to each other both on record and on tour: " 'Into the Fire' I wrote early, and 'The Rising' I wrote last, and they really sort of bookend the record. And we reversed them and we bookend the show with them now also, so they're two real central pieces, hopefully dedicated to the guys that really gave everything they had." [8]

TIMELINE: As one of the last songs written for the album, Springsteen speaks of "The Rising" and its *dream of life* as a destination: "It was kind of a curtain on the whole thing. I think a lot of the other songs were moving towards that direction." [1]

SPECIAL GUEST: Cellist Jane Scarpantoni

ALTERNATE VERSION: Springsteen read briefly from an early draft for Ted Koppel on *Nightline*: " 'Up


THE RISING
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
HIS FIRST ALL-NEW STUDIO ALBUM WITH THE E STREET BAND SINCE "BORN IN THE USA"
IN STORES TUESDAY, JULY 30
SEE BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND THE E STREET BAND PERFORMING LIVE ON THE TODAY SHOW FROM ASBURY PARK TUESDAY, JULY 30
ALSO APPEARING ON THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN
THURSDAY, AUGUST 1 & FRIDAY, AUGUST 2

on the mountain, we're going to climb.' That didn't make it to the end of the song, you know?..." [9]

BRUCE SAYS: "I was trying to describe the most powerful images of the 11th. People coming down [inside the World Trade Center] talked about the emergency workers ascending. I felt left with that image at the end of the day—those guys were going up the stairs, they could be ascending a smoky staircase or they could be in the afterlife." [3]

AFTERLIFE?: *Ted Koppel:* "You talk about 'The Rising.' I was almost thinking that you had the resurrection in mind."

Springsteen: "I'm a good—well, I was a good Catholic boy when I was little, and so those images for me are always very close and they explain a lot about life." [9]

BRUCE SAYS II: "I think it's a natural image of sacrifice. Once again we are moving towards religious imagery to explain some of the day's experiences. It's unavoidable to some degree because of the nature and the type of sacrifice that occurred. I got down toward the end of the record and I think I was searching for the voice of someone who dies, and I wanted to have a voice that addresses the living. So I just sort of imagined the main character basically... speaking to his wife. Who would you want to speak to? Your wife, and you'd think of your children. And then just those left at large, I think. The different verses move slowly towards that kind of crossing over point. 'The Rising'—that was it, that was the moment when the souls rise." [1]

WHO IS MARY? PART II: "[The name Mary] comes up again at the end of 'The Rising,' 'I see you Mary in the garden of a thousand sighs.' Once again, that's like someone's wife, or it could be a religious vision. I think that the songs call for a blurring of those ideas. They had to meld in a certain way, the religious with the everyday, because that's one of the only emotional responses to that experience, I think. So it floats through the record in a lot of ways." [1]

THE BREAKDOWN: As opposed to the simplicity of a song like "You're Missing," "The Rising" is rife with symbolism and metaphor—in part serving to make it more universal, and in part to artfully convey a spiritual transcendence. While much of the power of the imagery is that it's open to interpretation, Springsteen has been specific enough about his inspiration for the song that we can boil a few things down [see sidebar]. "Mary in the garden" suggests a very different image before Springsteen finishes the vision: "in the garden of a thousand sighs." That's a graveyard, a poetic euphemism that may originate in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, Act II, Scene IV. The "dream of life" Springsteen explains as "the awareness of what is about to be lost.... Just the magnitude of what you're leaving behind, what you're giving up, and a last chance to speak to people that matter to you."

And as for the catfish (the return of Big Jim?): "That was a funny line—the catfish line popped out of my head, 'cos I fish out here once in a while and there's that moment when *bing!* y'know, you're suspended between life and death, incredible life and a moment of death." [1]

14. PARADISE

Springsteen was "looking for something kind of really quiet" when he wrote this one, and coming across news of a teenage girl suicide bomber in Jerusalem provided a catalyst. But he characterized the writing process as less deliberate than usual: "I wasn't sure what I was saying when I wrote this song—I mean, that was instinctive.... it was really an intuitive song that fell together in a certain way." [8] It's similar to the way he has talked about "My Beautiful Reward," as he told *Musician* magazine in 1992: "I kept trying to make it nice and neat, to tie up the ending and make it more concrete.... and I realized it was right the way it was. It's one of those songs you don't consciously write—it comes up out of your unconscious or subconscious. That's why it's better than the stuff you slave over. I haven't tried to really interpret it."

TIMELINE: Along with the title track, one of the last songs written for *The Rising*.

SPECIAL GUESTS: None—not even the E Street Band. This is the one song that Springsteen performs alone, on guitar, keyboard, and percussion.

THE BREAKDOWN: The first two verses are from two different perspectives: a girl suicide bomber, and an American widow (inspired by a woman whose husband died at the Pentagon). Springsteen explained to *USA Today*'s Elysa Gardner: "So you have these two vignettes from completely different places. Then in the third verse, I imagined someone who had been left. The person goes into the river and goes under—and comes back up." [7]

BRUCE SAYS—VERSE ONE: "I was basically writing about the ideas of paradise. At the time when you were reading a lot of the newspapers—I wrote it after the first teenage girl's suicide bombing, and the way that paradise was used as a motivational tool, it just made me very angry. So I started off with that vignette. Somebody, you know, they're standing there, and they're waiting for paradise...." [8]

BRUCE SAYS—VERSE TWO: "Then I'd met a woman who had lost her husband at the Pentagon, and she came to Asbury one night, and they were just long-time fans, I guess. I think I was thinking of that woman when I wrote the song, which is why it switches from Virginia, because I wanted something that was outside the United States, the larger feeling of the effect of what's going on in the world outside the States. Again I thought, 'What do you miss?' You miss the physical-ness and the ability to touch somebody...." [1]

"The second verse... there was that interpretation of paradise, of waiting or hoping to meet someone who you've lost, in the afterlife, in another place. That idea of paradise, and of losing yourself to that idea of paradise." [8]

LYRIC CROSS-CHECK: "I search for you on the other side/Where the river runs clean and wide" mirrors "Down along the river's silent edge I soar / Searching for my beautiful reward" ("My Beautiful Reward").

That river ain't just a river; Springsteen told *Uncut* that these two songs "share some of the same issues. That transition point between life and death."

BRUCE SAYS—VERSE THREE: "And the last verse is a survivor's verse, where I think your desire to join the people you've lost is very strong. You have the situation where the person goes to that river, it's the river of transition between life and death and they wade into it and they take themselves underneath. Somewhere in that nether world they see the person and it kinda comes up with that last line—they're searching for the peacefulness that people feel comes with death and passing on, or with an imagined version of paradise that you'll attain, and they get close enough and they just see emptiness. There's a lot of different ways people could interpret it. I always felt it was, 'Hey, life is here. It's all you have and it's here and now.'" [1]

"And really, I was just trying to say that hey, all we have is this life, and we have this world, it's all we can count on. And at the end the person swims to the surface. That's the last scene in the song, and that's all we know, and that's all we've got to go by." [8]

15. MY CITY OF RUINS

Originally written for the struggling town of Asbury Park, but widely heard for the first time when Springsteen used it to open the September 21 *America: A Tribute to Heroes* telethon. Though Springsteen had already come up with "Into the Fire" and "You're Missing" by then—specifically for the telethon—Jon Landau reportedly suggested "My City of Ruins" as an appropriate song to play instead. While the telethon and *The Rising* inclusion cast it as a 9/11 ballad, Springsteen hasn't forgotten the song's inspiration, introducing it as "a prayer for my adopted hometown" at the Meadowlands tour opener on August 7.

TIMELINE: Written in 2000, "My City of Ruins" premiered on December 17 of that year, with Bruce performing it at both holiday shows in Asbury Park's Convention Hall.

SPECIAL GUEST: Cellist Jane Scarpantoni

ALTERNATE VERSIONS: In addition to the 2000 holiday shows, Springsteen also played the song in a solo acoustic form at the 2001 Clearwater Festival; acoustically with a group of backup singers for the *Tribute to Heroes* telethon; and again at the 2001 holiday shows. The holiday show version, closest in arrangement to the one Springsteen now plays on tour, also made great use of the horn section. But as for the basic structure and lyrical content of the song, the only difference between the first performance and the form it took on *The Rising* comes in the second verse, in which "the hustlers and thieves" has been changed to "the empty streets."

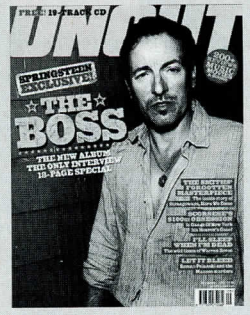
THE BREAKDOWN: In the first two verses, the narrator takes us on a descriptive tour of his struggling town. As "Lonesome Day" opens the record by going from a personal relationship to a universal outlook, "My City of Ruins" bookends it by bringing it back from the universal to the personal: in the third verse the city in ruins is an internal one, a metaphor for a broken heart and a life in shambles. The prayer that follows walks the line between plea and demand, growing in intensity like all great gospel music.

BRUCE SAYS: "It's a gospel song. It's like a lot of my things, like 'The Promised Land' or... 'Land of Hope and Dreams'... they're all fundamentally gospel-rooted, or blues- and gospel-rooted. It seemed like that element was going to be a significant element of the record in some fashion." [1]

SOURCES

1. "Into the Fire." By Adam Sweeting, *Uncut*
2. "Bruce Springsteen's American Gospel." By Mark Binelli, *Rolling Stone*
3. BBC World Service interview
4. "Bruce Springsteen: His Kind of Heroes, His Kind of Songs." By Jon Pareles, *New York Times*.
5. "Hope Won Out." By Robert Hilburn, *Los Angeles Times*
6. "Reborn in the U.S.A." By Josh Tyrangiel, *Time*
7. "Springsteen's 'Rising'." By Elysa Gardner, *USA Today*
8. Promotional interview video, Sony Music Entertainment
9. Ted Koppel interview, *Nightline*, ABC News

Backstreets is grateful for Springsteen's insights into the writing and recording of *The Rising*, made possible thanks to interviews from those listed above. We encourage you to the refer to the original sources if possible—especially Sweeting's incredibly in-depth article in the September 2002 issue of the UK magazine *Uncut*—for additional reading.



JUST A KISS AWAY

How do you begin again? On *The Rising*, JIM ANGEHR finds the answer in a kiss.

In the past, Bruce Springsteen has said that he has written all of his music to answer a single question implied in a line from his greatest song, "Born to Run": "I want to know if love is real." There's the rub, the issue that Springsteen's vast body of work has sought to answer. As heuristics go, Bruce's is a good one. Simply, is love real? That brave and frightened inquiry whispers through the entirety of what Springsteen has written and sung, and it's that whisper that resonates so deeply with so many of us. Really, what other question is more worth asking?

The Rising finds one. Not necessarily a more important question, but at least a more focused, pressing one. Springsteen's music has fought and sweat and struggled to tell us, to shout it out loud, that yes, love is real. Having already arrived at that affirmation, *The Rising* solemnly wonders, how do you live with love's loss? The fact that love is real makes its absence all the more wrenching. *The Rising* sifts through the heap of broken images left in love's wake. Even the raucous "Mary's Place" retains this baseline of pathos, as the mourning protagonist wonders, "Tell me how do you live broken-hearted?" That's the question this album raises and attempts to answer. How do you go on? Or in the words of "My City of Ruins," "Tell me how do I begin again?" Through a 15-song odyssey, *The Rising* ruminates upon loss and strives to find new beginnings.

Springsteen poses the album's primary theme with a single image that encapsulates what *The Rising* is all about: the kiss. It may seem that Springsteen mentions faith, strength, hope, and resurrection in many songs on this album (and he does), but the kiss appears in more songs than any of them, eight in all, almost in as many songs as the others combined. As a listener, you can either criticize Springsteen for wielding a limited palette of metaphors (as have some reviewers of the album in the press), or you can try to discern the significance of this recurrent image. It's not a throw-away word used repeatedly because Springsteen couldn't think of anything else to say.

Looking back upon older Springsteen songs, the kiss has a fairly consistent meaning and purpose. It is a kind of crux of truth. The kiss highlights in the most tangible way possible the reality of any given situation, showing you what is real and what isn't. Kisses don't lie; no matter how you might try to deceive yourself and others, you can't wash the truth from your lips. For example, in the alternate version of "Stolen Car" that circulated among fans for years and was finally released on *Tracks*, it's precisely when the protagonist leans over to kiss the pretty lips of his bride that his blissful illusion slips away. It wasn't real, and the kiss bore that out. Or on "Streets of Philadelphia," the suffering singer asks to be received by his brothers, but through a kiss he knows that any possible reception would be empty and "faithless" at best. More positively, the kiss shared by Frank and his brother before they ride off into "This Hard Land" communicates and solidifies the love they have for one another. Finally, in *The Ghost of Tom Joad*'s "Galveston Bay," Springsteen demonstrates the humanity and love of both Billy Sutter and Le Bin Son in their kissing of their daughter and son, respectively, in the early morning light. In Springsteen's music, whatever is true comes through in a kiss.

If you're trying to kick-start a broken heart, sitting in the dark and popping *Nebraska* in the player isn't your ticket to wellness.

Springsteen draws upon this metaphor of the kiss as a unifying thread that captures the different emotions, realities, failings, and possibilities that run through *The Rising*. If the album asks how we might live broken-hearted, the kiss presses the issue to the fore, distilling the theme and struggle of the album into one image. *The Rising*'s characters ache for their lost loved ones by longing for their kiss. The person in "Empty Sky" doesn't simply want a smooch when we hear, "I want a kiss from your lips." He/she desires to live on with his/her loved one as symbolized by the kiss, but the longing for the kiss also serves as a reminder that the lover has been stolen forever—the truth. (Notice how in the couplet "I want a kiss from your lips/I want an eye for an eye" Springsteen welds anguish, mourning, and bloodlust into a single emotion.) It's the same for "Into the Fire" and "My City of Ruins": the kiss is synecdochic for the presence and love of whole person (or city) and at the same time a searing token of deep loss. In "My City," the loss of a town's "kiss" gives way directly into the question of continuing on in love's absence. I've already quoted, "Tell me how do I begin again," but the lines directly beforehand read, "Without your sweet kiss/My soul is lost, my friend." In a similar vein, the ethereal "Paradise" features the kiss as the way in which the character experiences the emptiness of living through loss: "I taste the void upon your lips."

However, just as the kiss underlines the truth and reality of heartbreak, it also provides for the possibility of hope and renewal. Listen to the unfolding of the bridge in "Countin' on a Miracle." "Your kiss was taken from me/Now all I have is this..." This what? "This kiss," the very thing that has vanished. In the first line, the kiss plays a role similar to its use in "Empty Sky" and "Into the Fire," but there's more. The kiss is gone, but it lingers to lead us into a reality and truth that reaches beyond our palpable sadness, into "heart," "strength," "hope," "faith," and "love." To me, the miracle that the singer is counting on here isn't that the loved one against all hope and reason be returned—it's the singer's own survival and ability to find faith. With the hope that the lover's kiss provides, there's a fighting chance of working through and moving on. "If I'm gonna live," he sings, "I'll lift my life/Darlin' to you." The kiss is where that cautious optimism begins.

Is there optimism in "Nothing Man"? Not necessarily, but the nothing man, who feels empty sky in his soul, knows where to find it. He needs the companionship and love that a lover's kiss affords, but also he pleads with her to understand. If she doesn't, he'll sense it in that kiss. At the same time, the Lord's strength and his love's understanding, in a true kiss, are the only things that will keep the pearl and silver on the night table. Then there's "The Fuse." I wouldn't say we find "salvation" in this slow burner as much as release. Still, sexual intimacy gives an immediacy and energy to a life dulled by death, and you see it in a kiss—"your kiss and I'm alive." The kiss itself is the "fuse" that gets him going. And for what it's worth, if at the end of song the singer has rounded a couple more bases, we're still talking linguistics here. Finally, the kiss in "Worlds Apart" supplies us the final instance of this image, and in some ways it's the most telling. We meet two lovers standing upon blood and rubble, seeking faith in their kiss, and in it, truth. In that kiss a connection is found in the ruins, bringing hope and the possibility of withstanding the loss of being worlds apart. In some of the best lyrics from the entire album, Springsteen sings, "Sometimes the truth just ain't enough / Or it's too much in times like this / Let's throw the truth away / We'll find it in this kiss."

So just as the kiss draws us into *The Rising*'s core theme and problem, it also leads us to the tentative "solution" (or resolution) that the

album presents. That said, however, the record is a dark ride, and don't be too quick to turn on the house lights. Part of what makes *The Rising* a deeply moving piece of art is that it imparts such an eloquent voice to lament. We don't listen to "Empty Sky" and "You're Missing" in order to "fix the problem." We resonate with heartache. Any uplift growing out of those songs and from the cry of lament that threads throughout *The Rising* comes by way of catharsis, not 12-step programs. At the same time, Springsteen is too responsible an artist to ask, "Tell me how do you live broken-hearted?" and not offer some type of response. If you ask me, *The Rising*'s reply to that central question is threefold; you begin again with your hands, with your heart, and with your hope.

Springsteen answers his question of "how do I begin again?" straightaway at the end of "My City of Ruins": "with these hands." From the ruins comes the impulse to rebuild our lives piece by piece. That same aspiration drives "Mary's Place," frequently criticized for its somber story not jibing with the upbeat music. Well, if you're trying to kick-start a broken heart, sitting in the dark and popping *Nebraska* in the player isn't your ticket to wellness. You force yourself to get out and spend time with friends. Through persevering effort, with your "hands," you begin to take steps forward.

But that's hard work. The characters in *The Rising* have lost so much that the energy to move ahead is scarce, and sheer resolve will only last so long. The rebuilding begins with the hands, and if that were enough, that shattered soul of "My City of Ruins" wouldn't have to pray to heaven for strength, faith, and love. Through the heart, through love, the hands can make meaningful progress. Just maybe, enough love remains—among friends, among lovers, even between enemies—to overcome the love that was lost. Salvation by means of community is not a new concept in Springsteen's canon (most explicitly in the spoken intro to "Across the Border" from the *Tom Joad* tour), but never have the stakes been higher and connection so essential; the party at Mary's is a very important one. In a more quiet way, the nothing man hungers for love in fullness of understanding to steel him against his demons. Additionally, we've already seen the heart's significance in the kiss shared between lovers worlds apart, and the ending of that song emphasizes the point. If love holds out the promise of new beginnings, "let's let love give what it gives." Lastly, while Springsteen prays that we may gain strength, faith, and hope from a fireman's bravery, he concludes with love and repeats "may your love bring us love" by itself one final time, indicating its paramount significance. To my ears, in the closing of "Into the Fire," I hear an echo of the words of another famous person, who once said, "And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love." (Yes, I just quoted the Bible. No, I don't think Bruce is Jesus.)

And then there's hope. As I sit here and work on this essay, today I've heard that a close relative of mine has been diagnosed with a very serious disease. Right now, I, and others in my family, need strength in our "hands," and love in our hearts. Just as the characters on *The Rising*, we are praying for those things, but both of those seem feeble allies without hope. I can work, I can love, but if we live not knowing if a sunny day will ever come, who cares? Yet with hope, I work and I love. With hope, I press on. Without it, I don't.

If the kiss is the dominant image on *The Rising*, hope is the central message. In the language of "Lonesome Day," we know that we don't know much, that life can become one hellish storm, but we find our way by the conviction that this storm shall pass. As we stand under the sky of love and sorrow, glory and tears, in the album's title track, a dream of life comes to us. Behind a frowning fate, fragile hope peeks through. That's enough to keep us moving forward, heading further on up the road.

Jim Angebr is an assistant pastor at a Presbyterian church in West Philadelphia, and is completing his graduate studies at Westminster Theological Seminary this year.

UP ON THE ROOF WITH DANNY CLINCH

How *The Rising* album cover came together, and what it has to do with the Swimming Pool Q's. By BOB CRANE

JERSEY ROOTS, LOVE OF music, and passion for spontaneous-moment photography made Danny Clinch an ideal choice as photographer for *The Rising*, but what the heck were two Jersey guys doing on a rooftop, 12 stories above one of Atlanta's busiest intersections?

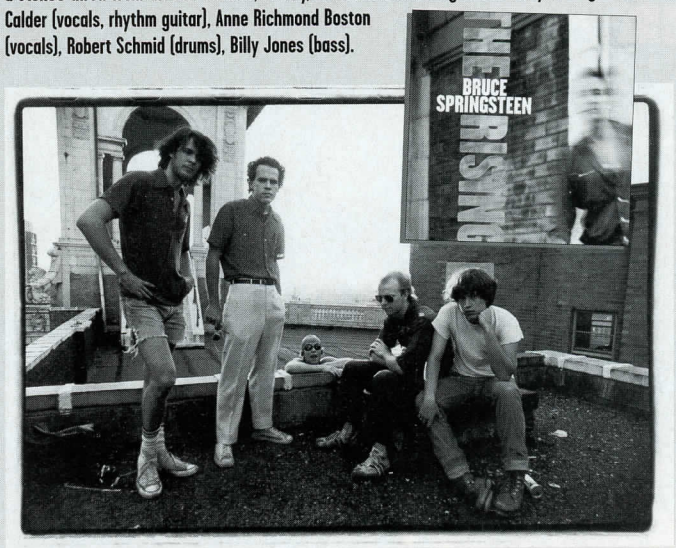
"We were up there working on an idea. I'd taken into consideration all of Bruce's earlier album covers, which for the most part are portraits," Clinch told *Backstreets*, and "I wanted to do something that hadn't been done."

Solution #1 was the use of a unique setting: the rooftop of the Ponce de Leon Apartments (designed, interestingly, by Tenafly, New Jersey architect W. L. Stoddard in 1912). The choice owed much to Jeff Calder, vocalist and rhythm guitarist for the legendary eccentric Atlanta band The Swimming Pool Q's. On break between tours, Calder helped scout potential settings and ended up taking Clinch to the roof of the landmark building at the corner of Ponce de Leon Avenue and Peachtree Street, where the Q's had done a photo session more than 20 years earlier. (A promotional photo from that session shows one of the two gazebo-like towers that would later form the backdrop for *The Rising.)*

Solution #2 was tougher. Clinch shot some images traditionally—Bruce still and razor-sharp—but primarily wanted to capture the emotion of edgy photography on old jazz albums. "That was my inspiration for the motion shots, those old Blue Note LPs," he said, but getting motion photography just right is no easy task. "You can shoot 100 shots and all of them can suck and then you get the one. If you don't take that chance, what's the fun?"

Going where others haven't been is very much the hallmark of Clinch's career. Born in Toms River, NJ, in 1964, Clinch spent two years at Ocean County Community College before focusing on a career in photography. His training included an internship with Annie Liebowitz, which in turn led to band portraiture and an awareness that with his camera he could "sneak into concerts and capture these really intense moments." Over the last decade, he's worked with everyone from Bob Dylan, David Byrne (whose head Clinch photographically inserted into a trash can), and the Beastie Boys, to Ja Rule, Bjork and the Foo Fighters. Not to mention Blind Melon—an accomplished harmonica player, Clinch was on stage with Blind Melon at Woodstock '94 and at a Stone Pony gig. Photography for *The Rising* was Clinch's third project with Springsteen, following sessions for the European tourbook in 1999 and *Live In New York City*.

Below: The Swimming Pool Q's photographed on the roof of the Ponce de Leon Apartment building, a stone's throw from the Fox Theatre, in July, 1978. From left to right: Bob Elsey (lead guitar), Jeff Calder (vocals, rhythm guitar), Anne Richmond Boston (vocals), Robert Schmid (drums), Billy Jones (bass).



RICHARD PEREZ PHOTO

BACK(LASH) ON TOP

He's everywhere! But while *hype* may be a four-letter word, the marketing ain't the message. By FRED MILLS

WHO WATCHES THE WATCHERS? In our media-saturated society, it's a fair question, particularly with the late-20th century ascendancy of media critics and internet-based pundits, both species given less to thoughtful weighing of issues of substance and quality and more to matters of the temporal- and surface-based.

I bring this up because no Springsteen-related phenomenon in memory—not the *Time*-and-*Newsweek* covers event, not even the Ronald Reagan/"Born in the U.S.A." debacle—has triggered more critical navel-gazing on All Things Bruce than the media blitz which accompanied the release of *The Rising*. With the exception of reviews actually written prior to B-Day, July 30, virtually every commentary filed about the new album made at least a passing reference to how the Boss and his handlers at Sony were getting the word out. And more than a few articles (such as in the August 16 issue of *Entertainment Weekly*) focused specifically on that alone; a tourist from Mars would be excused for mistakenly thinking the album was titled *The Marketing*.

That said, Bruce was starting to look pretty shameless by the time that first week's promotional marathon was winding down, if one judged solely by—Fatal Perception Flaw #1—appearances. Even if the artist was simply going along with his record company's contemporary marketing notions, it was hard not to mutter "media whore" under your breath—a term generally reserved for the latest youth sensation, an aging superstar diva, or Michael Jackson —every time he furrowed his brow and earnestly fielded yet another question about *The Rising* and how it was influenced by the events and aftermath of September 11.

Look, there he is, up at the crack of dawn on July 30, appearing on NBC's *Today*, which broadcasts Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band live from the Asbury Park Convention Hall. During the day both MSNBC and CNN air their own Springsteen reports, and—whoops, there's the guy again, chatting with Ted Koppel for ABC's *Nightline* and *Nightline: Up Close*. The Koppel interview continues the following night, and by Thursday and Friday Bruce has marched his E Streeters over to CBS to do a couple of tunes on *The Late Show With David Letterman*. See Bruce. See Dave. See Bruce kibitz with Dave! What, no time that afternoon to drop in and say howdy to Rosie and Oprah, too? As Eric Alterman, who wrote the '99 Boss book *It Ain't No Sin to be Glad You're Alive*, quipped in *The Nation*, "I half expected him to duet with Elmo or Big Bird over breakfast." Word also quickly came that Bruce would be the subject of MTV2's new Kurt Loder-hosted interview show *The Table* on August 20, while the E Streeters were slated to open the *MTV Video Music Awards* on August 29 and appear as the musical guest on the October 5 season premiere of *Saturday Night Live*. So a *Sesame Street* spot isn't all that far-fetched... maybe a reworking of "Chicken Lips and Lizard Hips," hmm?... Meanwhile, newsstands sagged under the weight of Springsteen's stubble-flecked mug.

SPRINGSTEEN CHATS WITH TED KOPPEL ON *NIGHTLINE*

IDA MAE ASTUTE/ABC PHOTO

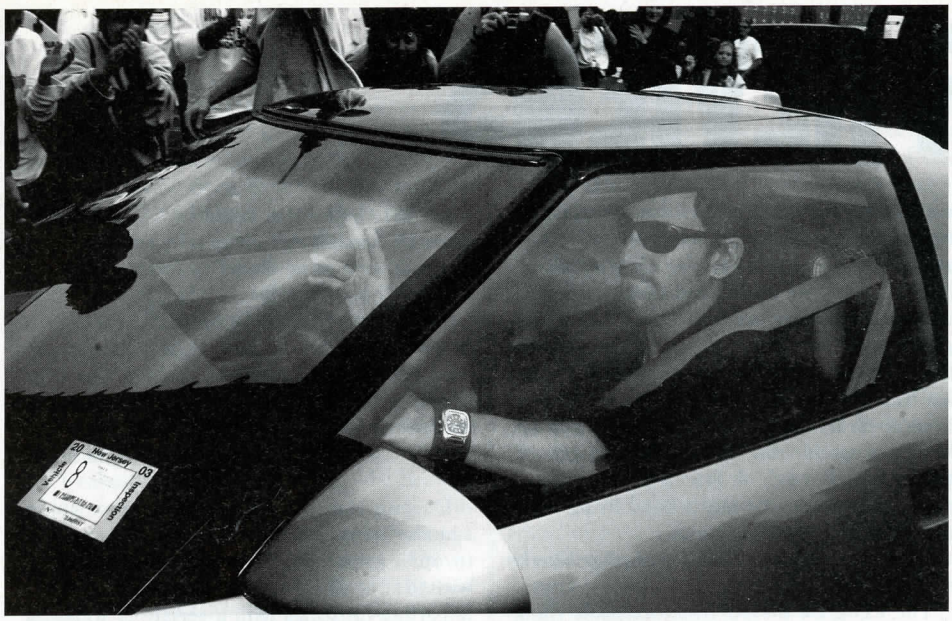
Is there that much riding on *The Rising*? Sony/Columbia thinks so. In 2002, record labels are hot to land their new releases at Number One on the Soundscan-tallied *Billboard* charts, and the pressure is on each week to maintain a high-charting placement. The media has duly fallen into line, reporting weekly album sales like a NASCAR race ("this week Springsteen dropped to No. 3, while Eminem regained his No. 1 slot, just slightly ahead of Shaggy at No. 2..."), as if this were—Fatal Perception Flaw #2—some real measurement of artistic merit. So, ever mindful of how fickle the millennial marketplace has become (witness recent chart flops by Mick Jagger, Paul McCartney and David Bowie), Bruce's label was working overtime well in advance of the mid-summer street date. Starting June 24 it began "releasing" weekly previews of *The Rising*, streaming key songs from the album at Springsteen's official website and at AOL and Netscape kiosks.

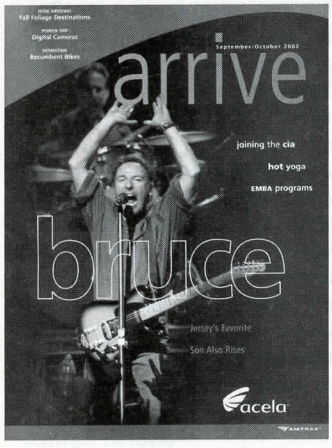
The title cut was such an internet splash that it actually entered *Billboard*'s Adult Top 40 chart at 22 and the Mainstream Rock Tracks chart at 28. The label also held high-profile listening parties for the album in numerous cities. According to SoundScan, the album wound up debuting on the *Billboard* Top 200 at No. 1, selling about 526,000 copies during its first week; it also debuted at No. 1 in seven other countries and, as of this writing, shows no sign of stalling in worldwide sales. Commercial "hits" radio has, resisted it in general, however, suggesting that we won't be getting the *Born in the U.S.A.* overkill, singles-wise, on the airwaves this time.

While Sony was no doubt pleased, a lot of long-time Springsteen fans were turned off by all the hoo-hah, judging by heated debates that played out across Boss-related Internet newsgroups. Even national pop critic Tom Moon and former *Backstreets* publisher Charles Cross were quoted in *USA Today* as being a bit uncomfortable with what Moon termed "a scorched earth" publicity campaign linking 9/11 with *The Rising*. "I like to bring my own interpretation to it," said Cross.

Mark Judge, author *If It Ain't Got That Swing: The Rebirth of Grown-Up Culture* and clearly not a Springsteen fan, took things to the next level, bluntly complaining, "We've been told more

DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO





ABOVE: Bruce behind the wheel, a familiar sight from Springsteen's small-screen promo blitz.

LEFT: Even this train carries Jersey's favorite son: Bruce finally makes the cover of *Arrive*, the bi-monthly magazine of Amtrak. Woo-hoo!

than once in recent weeks that someone stopped Bruce's car on Sept. 11 and shouted, 'We need you!' The press has apparently joined the choir of petitioners." Judge went on to tear new assholes for Koppel, Loder and *Today*'s Katie Couric, in particular singling out Alterman for the high crime of being a "weak-kneed" fan first, critic second.

Judge also suggests—Fatal Perception Flaw #3—that Springsteen, and by implication, any "entertainer" who avails himself of media outlets for promoting a new work, has spawned several unique new breeds of critics: "the toady, the sycophant, the lapdog journalist, the tin-eared bore." In fact it's the media, having long ago jumped into bed with the entertainment and advertising industries, which has been carefully nurturing these breeds, the sort that won't rattle the bottom-line cage. Who watches the watchers indeed.

Of course, as it turns out, there *is* a lot riding on *The Rising* for Springsteen. It's just that the stakes for him aren't so much commercial as they are artistic. Springsteen, who has always steadfastly maintained that one of the writer's chief goals is communication with his audience, is no dummy. He instinctively grasps how a "topical/relevant" message from an over-50 rock 'n' roller can be swept over in the blink of an *American Idol* broadcast. If you want to get your message across, you use the tools at your disposal (think about all the talented artists who have genuine insights to share, but don't have the means or the funding to reach much beyond a very limited local or regional audience). And that's nothing new in 2002; diligent self-promotion has been the rule for the successful artist ever since the days of Shakespeare. Springsteen tacitly acknowledged this when, in Britain's *Uncut* magazine (at the time of this writing, his only interview with an overseas publication), he told the reporter, "I've got a working band, we're gonna go out and... play this record every night. I'll do my best to help it find a home and a place in the world, and then let chips fall where they may."

At the same time, Springsteen's also got the kind of self-confidence in his artistry that arrives with having spent well over half of his 53 years refining it. Responding to the *Time* interviewer's question about whether he's comfortable with this type of media courtship for a record that deals with such intensely intimate and emotional—and for some, uncomfortable—subject matter, he allowed, "You have to be very... just very thoughtful, is the way I'd put it. You call on your craft, and you go searching for it, and hopefully what makes people listen is that over the years you've been serious and honest. That's where your creative authority comes from. That's how people know you're not just taking a ride."

Furthermore, think about what that oft-quoted guy shouted ("We need you!") to Bruce last September. He didn't say want, he said *need*—and there's a key difference between the terms, one which underlines why Springsteen's motivation for promoting the album so vigorously stems from anything *but* a shameless sense of commercial exploitation. I brought this up with my esteemed *Backstreets* editor, who mused, "One thing I wonder about is the way Bruce seems to go in waves of wanting to conquer the world, followed by a pull-back. But he keeps coming back to wanting to conquer the world. *Born in the U.S.A.* wasn't enough—why is that? Does it come from the same place that drove him to perform to exhaustion? Is it ego-feeding? Is it a belief in the material? A simple 'if you're doing it, do it all the way'?"

Maybe a bit of "all of the above." Only Bruce can say, and he probably isn't completely sure himself. Still, on that July 30 *Today Show*, he did offer this subtle but telling insight into what he needs. As a songwriter and a performer, he said, "You're a witness. A witness to your times, your events, your neighborhood, to what you're doing. And our band, we take the stage as a group of witnesses, really.

"Our purpose is to make you dance," he added with a hearty laugh, before turning serious again. "And to testify. And that's the crux of what we do. Hopefully you'll move and be lifted up."

Fatal Perception Flaw #4: Paying attention to, and becoming uncomfortable by, all the surface chatter, the white noise and the media blather—when you should be listening with your ears, your heart and your mind (and yeah, your ass and your feet sometimes, too) to our artists. Trust 'em. They know their jobs.

BORN TO PUN

With Springsteen's new album on the rise, we sensed a rising tide of puns just over the rise, and sure enough, they rose right on up. Puns are funny— no, wait, they're punny! We get a real rise out of 'em. Here's our top ten:

SPRINGSTEEN RISES TO THE CHALLENGE
—BBC News Online

"RISING" TO THE TASK
—Boston Herald

THE BOSS RISES ON E STREET
—Winnipeg Sun

HIS CITY OF RUINS IS RISING
—Hartford Courant

"THE RISING" SHINES
—Detroit Free Press

WHY IS EVERYONE FALLING FOR *THE RISING?*
—Reason

BAD MOON "RISING"
—San Diego Union Tribune

SPRINGSTEEN RISES TO THE OCCASION FOR 9-11
—Edmonton Sun

THE BOSS RISES TO OCCASION
—Toronto Sun

RISING TO THE OCCASION
—Raleigh News Observer

MOURN IN THE U.S.A.
—Lincoln Journal Star

READER REVIEWS

This is probably the best album I've heard since *Automatic for the People,* which was R.E.M.'s greatest achievement in my opinion. There's a lot of similarity in the way I feel about *The Rising* and *Automatic,* in that while neither one is necessarily my favorite album by the respective artists, they are both creatively and thematically their most unified, well thought-out, and most solid artistic works.

The best thing about the music here, the thing that separates Bruce from almost anyone else I can think of, is that the material is *informed by the things they've done before, without being a rehash.* Any good band feels the need to do new things, to not just put out album after album of exactly the same stuff. God knows I love R.E.M., but this is an area where I think they take the easy way out. With each record, they consciously want to forget lessons learned on their past work, and move on to something completely different. Bruce has done something more difficult. Nothing here sounds like a remake of something done before, yet the building blocks are all still the same: not to "sound like the E Street Band," but to serve the stuff they want to do this time. So they end up with an authentic outgrowth of their old stuff, not just something that's different for difference's sake. *The Rising* sounds like an E Street reunion, but not because it's trying to. Which is all you can ask. In a year, my favorite album will probably still be *The River.* But I think that in terms of artistic merit, thematic unity, and a band firing on all cylinders, this record is better.

—Christopher Stucky

The CD grew on me, from originally thinking the single "The Rising" was just so-so, to days when nearly the whole CD was almost addictive—especially after hearing the material live. As with any release there are tracks that I enjoy—or that really talk to me—far more than others. I think one thing has been proven, however, and that's if anyone else tries to musically express a nation's feelings following September 11, 2001, and try to effect some healing in us, they won't even come close. **—Linda Herbkersman**

I agree with Steve Morse of the *Boston Globe* who wrote that this record contains some Bruce's most brilliant and most embarrassing moments. The same problems plague *The Rising* as many of Bruce's other records: poor production, poor choices of instrumentation (too much synthesizer!), a need for some editing and a resequencing of songs. As much as I applaud Bruce's decision to work with a new producer, I am still disappointed with the results.

—Paul Haider

I didn't think there could be a better album than *Darkness,* but this is it. Some of these songs deserve more than a 10 ("Paradise," "The Rising," "Lonesome Day," "My City of Ruins," "Worlds Apart," "Empty Sky"). Unlike most Bruce fans, I have nothing to complain about. This is simply a great album by the best artist of our time. A lot of chances were taken on this album, and by my ear they all paid off.

—Chris Sager

Despite the 9/11 connection, these songs can also transcend the event and strike chords in our experience that have no connection with 9/11 at all. That's Springsteen's true gift—imparting his songs with a versatility to be for the listeners what they need them to be. The album is a varied, challenging, affirming listen that snares snatches of Springsteen's past as it attempts to cut a road for his future.

—Jim Turano

Getting Brendan O'Brien to produce *The Rising* must be one of the greatest decisions Bruce and his people have made, ever. The soundscape of the new LP is amazing. There are great moments even on the lesser songs, like "Empty Sky" or "Countin' on a Miracle." It was great to find Steve's mandolin lurking in "Further On (Up the Road)"—took me three listens. Also, the record is worth its price for just the achingly beautiful "Paradise."

—Samuli Lintula

A revelation came to me after reading Steinbeck's published letters written while writing *East of Eden.* He describes how important it was for him to write this book about lost lives and the difficulty of maintaining faith in the face of evil in a universally understood language. So he simplifies and strips down his sentences to an almost abstract purity, while relying heavily on biblical metaphor.

It seems to me that after channeling Steinbeck's subject matter and characters in *The Ghost of Tom Joad,* Springsteen has done something far more curious, strange, and great with *The Rising.* He's channeled the very spirit of Steinbeck: his empathy, anger, poetry, and the result is much like *East of Eden. The Rising* is a big album, written in extraordinarily simple language and vivid images built heavily on metaphor. Occasionally it is overly metaphoric, as though Bruce were backing off of his delicate subject matter; it is even bombastic in production and length, and I feel embarrassed by some of the songs. Yet like East of Eden, it is some kind of masterpiece, a whole that is far greater than its parts, a cumulative effect that is devastating and inspiring. **—Steve Farneth**

Does Brendan O'Brien get paid every time he puts strings on a song? **—Richard Gremmo**

IT'S GOT A GOOD BEAT AND YOU CAN DANCE TO IT

WHEN *THE RISING* WAS released, we ran a poll at backstreets.com, asking readers to rate each song from 1-10. We received a whopping 4,368 responses—and surprisingly few complaints. Bob Condren wrote, "After thinking it over, I do not think that these songs lend themselves to a number ratings. *The Rising* is a very strong, emotional album and trying to assign a number to 'You're Missing' or 'Paradise,' for me, just doesn't work." Fair enough. As for the other 4,367 responses, some readers gave tens across the board, some used the entire scale. The average rating for the album as a whole: 8.791. We've listed the average rating for each song below, and of course we wouldn't ask you to do something we weren't willing to do ourselves, so we've also listed the *Backstreets* Editors' ratings. You can decide for yourself who's full of it. Thanks once again to Mr. Paul Chernoff for number-crunching.

	READERS' AVERAGE	CHRIS PHILLIPS	ANDREW MASSIMINO	JONATHAN PONT	CHARLES R. CROSS	ERIK FLANNIGAN	EDITORS' AVERAGE
The Rising	9.12	10	9	9	6	6	8.0
My City of Ruins	8.99	9	10	10	10	8	9.4
You're Missing	8.75	10	10	10	9	9	9.6
Lonesome Day	8.62	9	9	9	9	9	9.0
Mary's Place	8.34	3	3	5	8	4	4.6
Into the Fire	8.29	7	6	7	6	7	6.6
Empty Sky	8.10	9	8	10	4	6	7.4
Further On (Up the Road)	8.09	8	8	9	6	6	7.4
Paradise	8.07	8	8	7	7	8	7.6
Waitin' on a Sunny Day	8.05	6	4	6	4	4	4.8
Nothing Man	7.90	7	7	7	6	7	6.8
Worlds Apart	7.84	9	8	8	4	5	6.8
Countin' on a Miracle	7.60	4	6	5	2	2	3.8
The Fuse	7.31	8	7	7	4	5	6.2
Let's Be Friends	6.90	5	7	8	6	4	6.0

As we all get older, we wonder if we have the capacity to "surprise" any more. I've been a fan since I heard "Born to Run" as a 16-year-old in 1975, so, I guess, nothing Bruce does should surprise me. But the levels of intensity, beauty, sadness, joy, musicianship, creativity, and, to borrow from Bruce, hope and faith found on *The Rising* are astonishing. His gift for communicating empathy through music is stunning. **—James Healy**

God bless Brendan O'Brien.

—Pedro Learreta

With the exception of "Back in Your Arms," Bruce hasn't written a great song since the *Tunnel of Love* CD, but *The Rising* is a collection of his weakest writing yet. It seems like he's out of inspiration, even when the impetus for this CD is 9/11. "Worlds Apart" is a melody ripped off from an unfinished Dylan song "Almost Done." He also blatantly rips off the old gospel/soul standard "People Get Ready" for the first half of every verse of "My City of Ruins." Furthermore, all this talk about what a great job Brendan O'Brien did is nonsense—half the time the vocals are drowned out by the music, and the arrangements often don't fit the mood of the song. I'd like to blame O'Brien for "The Fuse" arrangement, but for all I know, Bruce came up with it himself. It's like a bad "57 Channels" sound—need I say more—and it's a very weak song to begin with. The hook in "Mary's Place" sounds like a jingle for some clam shack. "Further On (Up the Road)" is dime-a-dozen material, "Paradise" sounds like something that didn't make the cut for "Tom Joad," "Let's Be Friends" sounds like Bruce is demoing material for 'N Sync—and off-tune at that. I'm only critical because he's proven his ability in the past to write brilliant, emotive songs that somehow sum up certain universal experiences meaningfully and truly in a vernacular and a voice distinctly his own. While *The Rising* is still better than almost anything that anyone is releasing, that's not good enough for Bruce. He's competing against himself every time out. And the old melodies were stronger, the old lyrics cut deeper and truer, and the old sound didn't apologize for being a throwback—it didn't try to go pop like "Let's Be Friends" or "The Fuse."

—Dane Metta

I don't think enough has been made in the media of just how different each Springsteen album is. Certainly you can recognize his voice from album to album, but the difference between, say *Nebraska* and *Tunnel*, or *Darkness* and *Born to Run*, or *Greetings* and *The River* is astonishing. And this new one is different from anything that came before it. Bowie did it for a few albums in the 70s, but I know of no other artist who can come close to that over an entire career. **—Jerome Davis**

Very good stuff on this CD, but a little too much of a morose theme for my taste. Where are the girls and the cars? Maybe I need to grow up. **—James J. Kent**

It's sometimes a shame the CD format was invented. This record is a couple of tracks too long. When it comes to live albums, the longer the merrier. But a little more editing here wouldn't have gone amiss. And "Let's Be Friends" bang-smack in the middle of the record (and just after the great "Worlds Apart") takes a lot of the focus and intensity out of it. I love "My City Of Ruins" as a song, but fear this version has done to it what the *Human Touch* production did to "Real World."

—Giacomo O. Squintani

The Rising is an extraordinary album, both lyrically and musically. From the swirling feel of "Lonesome Day," the hopeful mantra of "Waitin' on a Sunny Day," the beautiful tribute to the heroes of 9/11 of "Into the Fire," the haunting "Nothing Man," the ethereal "Paradise," and the call to goodness and spirituality that the album as a whole invokes—every time I listen to this record I'm taken aback by its depth and beauty. **—Susan Erlichman**

"Worlds Apart" is the kind of thing I expected Bruce would try ten years ago with his new band. I really think this track works, primarily because the main motive is Springsteenian, not merely gratuitously Eastern. Critics who are crying "Sting did it first!" don't get the point: not only does Springsteen write better lyrics, and use the musical styles to make a more sophisticated point; but if for some ridiculous reason the whole of rock music gets only one shot at this sort of thing, one has to go back at least to Led Zeppelin's "Kashmir."

—Chris Ryan

I'm appreciative that someone of the Boss's talent has tackled the theme and come up with worthy documentation for the generations who follow us. These songs won't make it into any canon of socially-conscious rock and roll songs, but that's okay; they make me feel something strong when I hear them now, and I don't think that power will fizzle over time.

There's one thing that really undercuts *The Rising*, though. Lyrically it's a lazy album, compared to what Springsteen has generated in the past. (I'll leave it to *Backstreets* to do the math and tell us how many times the word "kiss" shows up; even without the figures, it's apparent that Bruce may have crossed that bloody, muddy river into the land of cliché and banality a few times on this one.) What's missing are the stories, the characters, and the drama that make for classic songs. We feel like we know the guy in "Racing in the Street," we're able see the couple from "The River" in our mind's eye, and the adversaries from "Galveston Bay" appear to us as vividly as on a movie screen. But who did we meet on *The Rising*? I can't think of anyone. "Nothing Man" had the potential to give us a character to conjure in our imagination, but it's as though Springsteen has eschewed the straight-ahead fiction writing of the past for a something cuter (I think it's called poetry). We're left with some interesting color and details, but none of the drama that drives the Boss's best works. I love the idea of "Paradise"—and kudos to Bruce for creating a song of this heft—but I don't quite get it. I wish there could have been more of a narrative thread, a character, or any of the other short-story conventions that he customarily uses. **—Eric Jones**

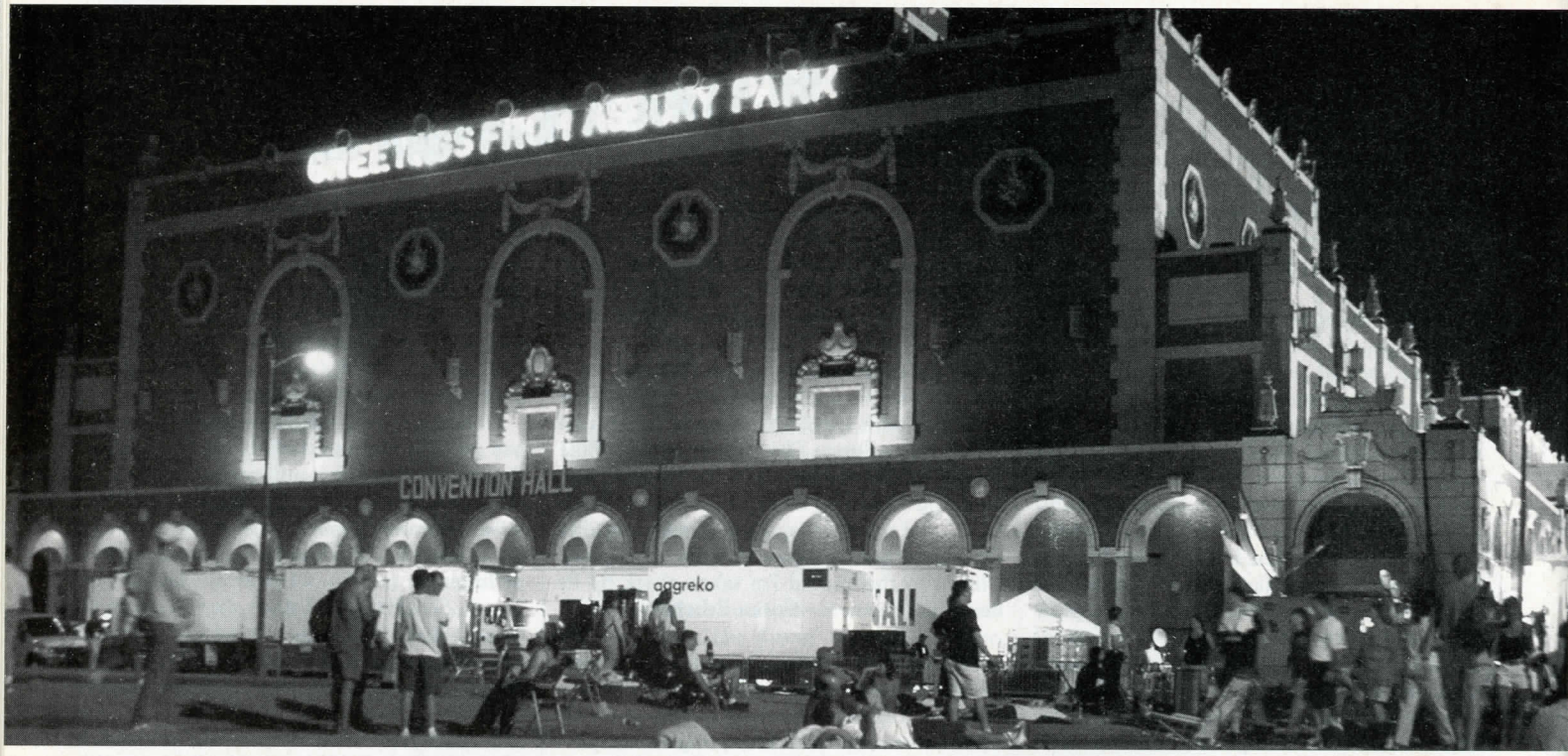
While a lot of Bruce's music slaps you in the face immediately, these songs crawled under my skin to live for awhile. I didn't even know they were there until one day at work I realized I was singing "The Fuse." That song always seemed sort of blah to me, then I realized that I *had* to listen to it. It's now one of my favorite songs on the album.

Production: aww, whatever. Bruce has never had good production. Let's face it: he's one of the great songwriters and probably the best performer, but he is just not a good recording artist. He rarely commits a song to tape in an artful way that will not be surpassed by live performance (see "Soul Driver" at the Christic show). So whatever, I don't care. It's part of being a Bruce fan. I don't mind the strings, I miss the piano, and I actually like "Worlds Apart" (unlike everyone else). **—John Mayer**

Probably the most impressive comeback album of all time. Also probably the most relevant work ever put out by an artist at this late stage in his career. While I liked some of the material that Bruce put out in the '90s, this album surpasses *Human Touch*, *Lucky Town* and *The Ghost of Tom Joad* by such a huge margin, it almost seems as if he slept through the past decade and finally woke up. I feel that lyrically Springsteen never lost his edge at any point in his career, in sharp contrast to the stripped-down sound of *Tom Joad*, the songwriting on *The Rising* comes alive with marvelous arrangements and fantastic instrumentation. The E Street Band is truly in top form on this album. I've looked forward to a new E Street album for years, and this really proves to me that it was worth the wait. Springsteen has shown once again why he is America's greatest poet, rocker and conscience. **—Sean Loughlin**

I think the best description of what I love about the E Street band cane from a musician who hated them. He said, "It sounds like carnival music." And I said "You're right... and I love that sound." You can't get that two keyboards and a sax anywhere else. And sadly, I can't get it here anymore either. This to me is much more a Bruce album than an E Street Band album—a *Lucky Town* with more good songs. It's solid, even wonderful in places (I'm very impressed with "Worlds Apart") but it's *not* an E Street Band album. **—Robert Bernhardt**

Easily the best thing Bruce has done in 20 years. His original inspiration may have been a fan screaming "we need you," but the resulting album shows Bruce needed us as well. The overtones of community, mass rising, and strengthening individual connections indicates that Bruce, as all of us have done, took stock of what was important to him: his band, his fans and his work. **—Kevin Compton**



GET READY, 'CAUSE HERE I COME

Hunkering down and warming up in Asbury Park, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band's rehearsal week opened the door to fans and TV cameras alike. From a restaurant's back room to your living room, a Jersey-Style warm-up for the *Rising* Tour.

BY LISA IANNUCCI

"WE DON'T NEED NO AIR CONDITIONING!" Bruce Springsteen declared midway through the second of several rehearsal shows in Asbury Park's Convention Hall. Fans who had waited for hours in the stifling heat of late July in hopes of gaining admittance to these special shows may have disagreed. Temperatures consistently hovered in the upper 90s even at night, and with precious little shade outside and no air conditioning inside, the week seemed more about survival than anything else for the faithful who made the pilgrimage to Asbury Park. But those who did withstand the conditions were treated to a week filled with true rarities: three full-blown rehearsal concerts in the intimate atmosphere of Convention Hall, and a fourth in the friendly confines of Continental Airlines Arena. Not to mention, of course, assorted special performances and the main-event *Today* show broadcast.

The performances themselves were rehearsals first-and-foremost, so there were a few rough spots here and there. But the audiences (which were comprised of VIP guests, contest winners and a few hundred diehards) were enthusiastic and receptive to the new material as well as the old favorites, pardoning the occasional false start or missed cue as well as the oppressive heat. During the course of the week it was clear that Bruce was working to develop a coherent set list which, while also incorporating some fan favorites, would include a large number of songs from *The Rising*. As a result, the rehearsal shows were often quiet, intense affairs, and the carefully chosen material primarily reflected a somber mood and message.

The new CD's themes of love, loss, faith, hope and triumph were repeatedly echoed in the rehearsal performances. There were several standout moments, including a fascinating departure from E Street. On the first couple of nights, the band—with Clarence on bagpipes—opened the new "Into the Fire" with a dirge clearly meant to evoke the memory of last fall's many funerals. It seemed a masterstroke, but unfortunately, there were problems with amplification of the instrument, and the idea was abandoned after the July 30 evening show. The dimly-lit silhouette of the Big Man marching across the stage as he wailed on the pipes was one not soon forgotten. Other highlights included an intense, rarely-performed "Jackson Cage" and a starkly beautiful "Paradise, " which featured Garry Tallent on upright bass.

One of the more unusual events of the week was Bruce's July 24 auto tour of various Asbury Park sites, filmed for the *Today* show broadcast. Reports came in throughout the day from excited fans who had seen him driving Matt Lauer around in his Corvette convertible. More than a few people had received tip-offs that Bruce was going to appear, but he seemed surprised by the small crowd which greeted him at Georgie's, a bar on Fifth Avenue. It was hard to miss his aqua blue car tooling around town, and before long, he was being followed by several fan-filled vehicles. People leaned out of their car windows snapping photos and calling

out to him as he drove by. While it is not unheard of to see Bruce motoring around the Jersey Shore, it is rare enough to cause a stir, especially when he is accompanied by a television personality and a camera crew. By the time the tour wound up at Sonny's Southern Cuisine, he and Lauer seemed a bit relieved to get inside.

Even more remarkable were the daily post-rehearsal appearances by both Bruce and band. What had started off being dedication (fans who had gathered on the beach to listen to the rehearsals were hesitant to leave) soon became a daily ritual. After the shows ended each day, Bruce and assorted E Streeters would appear at the railing on the south side of Convention Hall, happily obliging the waiting throng with waves and smiles, and often posing for photos. "Always expect excellence from the E Street Band," commented Clarence in response to a fan's adulation at one of these sessions. Apparently liking the sound of that pronouncement, he coached the fans standing on the beach to parrot it back—first to him, and then to a succession of E Street Band members, who seemed both amused and flattered by this group cheer. The gag finally ended when Bruce himself appeared, doubling over in laughter at the Big Man's shenanigans. The rehearsal shows themselves were clearly "all business," but offstage Bruce and the band seemed more spontaneous and accessible than ever during this frenzied week.

THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK was, of course, the hotly anticipated July 30 *Today* show broadcast, which fell in the midst of the rehearsals. Convention Hall assumed the air of a three-ring circus for this event, as various lines formed around the building almost a full day in advance of the show's 7:00 a.m. start time. People brought blankets and lawn chairs, sleeping on the boardwalk all night just to be up front for the television cameras. There were the usual "drop line" hopefuls sleeping on the lawn west of the building, hoping to actually be inside the building for the performance. As dawn drew near, additional crowds assembled on the beach at the south side of Convention Hall to watch the proceedings on a large screen provided by NBC. There was little parking to be found, and local restaurants seemed overwhelmed by demand. Both visitors and longtime residents were excited to see their beloved Asbury Park on national television, and it was indeed very moving to see the waterfront area filled with people once again, if only for a few hours.

As for the performances, there were two brief sets consisting of some warm-up acoustic numbers and the broadcast itself. These were almost anticlimactic, as stress, heat and the early hour clearly had taken their toll on both fans and performers. Guitarist Steve Van Zandt was a late arrival (he was witnessed rushing in sheepishly just as the acoustic set was winding up), and Bruce's vocals were a bit rough throughout. However, the drowsy, sweaty crowd responded admirably once the cameras began to roll, and, rising to the occasion, Springsteen and Co. turned in an energetic performance despite the early hour.

DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTOS

There were other performances during rehearsal week in addition to the Convention Hall activities. The two invitation-only affairs at Sonny's Southern Cuisine on Cookman Avenue in Asbury Park were, by all accounts, remarkable. The first performance was filmed by the *Today* show crew, and featured the same South Community Choir with which Bruce had worked on the 2001 holiday shows. The second, given at a private post-show party on July 26, consisted of a five-song, request-filled set for which Bruce carried along his personal songbook. Patti was also present for this event, which was reminiscent of April's RCDS benefit shows at the Stone Pony.

Bruce and band were also guests of *The Late Show with David Letterman* on its August 1 and 2 broadcasts. They rounded out the festivities with a "dress rehearsal" at the Continental Airlines Arena in East Rutherford, NJ, on August 5. The 8/5 show was again performed for guests and some lucky drop-line fans, as well as for employees and friends of a local food bank. The set was by now fairly standard, and though the arena was nowhere near full, energy was high, as both performers and audience finally derived the benefits of a larger space, a full lighting rig, and most importantly, *air conditioning*, on what would be their last test run.

It was a long, hot week of excitement and anticipation in Asbury Park, but those who came prepared for the heat and long hours of waiting were rewarded with the first glimpses of the 2002 model E Street Band.

JULY 24
SONNY'S SOUTHERN CUISINE
ASBURY PARK, NJ

SETLIST: I've Got a Feeling/My City of Ruins

NOTES: After a couple of weeks of private rehearsals at Fort Monmouth, Springsteen and the E Street Band moved to Asbury Park on July 23 to begin a more public stage of their preparation for the *Rising* tour. Bruce's personal tour of Asbury for the *Today* show's Matt Lauer included an afternoon stop at Sonny's for this two-song performance. Restaurant owner Bill "Sonny" Wiley told the *Newark Star-Ledger*: "It was like seeing someone on VH-1, 'unplugged.' I tell you, he brought tears to my eyes. You could hear a pin drop in the room." Springsteen was joined on these two songs by a small gospel choir, and brief clips were later aired on the July 29 and 30 *Today* show broadcasts.

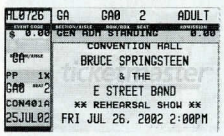
Later in the afternoon, Springsteen met the E Street Band for a closed rehearsal at Convention Hall, where tour preparation would continue in earnest for the next week and a half.

JULY 25
CONVENTION HALL
ASBURY PARK, NJ

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Fuse/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waiting on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Two Hearts/Mary's Place/Into the Fire

NOTES: Beginning with this abbreviated set, Springsteen opened the Convention Hall doors for a series of "dress rehearsal" shows. A small, industry-only crowd (approximately 50 people, largely from VH-1 and Sony) witnessed this first public view of *The Rising* show, featuring largely what will become the tour's mainstays, in order. The same stage setup as the 1999-2000 tour, with one exception: Soozie Tyrell (on background vocals and violin) joined the E Street Band on a more permanent basis after her reunion tour guest spots, taking her position between Garry Tallent and Roy Bittan's piano. After a 12-song, hour-and-15-minute performance, Springsteen came out to greet the group of around 150 fans listening from the beach.

JULY 26
CONVENTION HALL
ASBURY PARK, NJ



SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Prove It All Night/The Fuse/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Two Hearts/Mary's Place/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/My Hometown/Countin' on a Miracle/American Skin (41 Shots)/Into the Fire//Born to Run/Glory Days//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams/The Rising

NOTES: The first full-show rehearsal, for an audience of radio contest winners. Clarence plays bagpipes on a work-in-progress prelude to "Into the Fire." In the encores, "Glory Days" appears after a lengthy absence. As does the full-band electric "Born in the U.S.A.," forming a second encore here that will stay largely intact throughout the first U.S. leg. Other 2002 rarities are "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out" (a shorter version than on the reunion tour, without band introductions), and "My Hometown."

PRESS: "BRUCE ROCKS ASBURY: FANS FROM ACROSS U.S. CHEER SPRINGSTEEN." Kelly-Jane Cotter in the *Asbury Park Press:* ..."It's good to have you folks in town," Springsteen told his audience, which consisted of radio listeners from across the country. "Asbury Park can use some support. Get out there and buy some lunch."...

The concert had a playful, casual air. Springsteen fumbled over lyrics at the beginning of "Mary's Place," so he laughed and started over. "Hope I don't _____ up at the Meadowlands," he told the crowd. "That's why you practice. That'd be public humiliation."

At the end of the show, Springsteen asked fans if they'd mind hearing "The Rising" again, because the show was being filmed and he wanted another shot at it. The crowd cheered and the band played it again.

JULY 26
SONNY'S SOUTHERN CUISINE
ASBURY PARK, NJ

SETLIST: Back in Your Arms/Tougher than the Rest/I Wish I Were Blind/Growin' Up/Thunder Road

NOTES: After the 7/26 afternoon rehearsal concert, Springsteen played an even more intimate set for a private post-show party at Sonny's. All but "Growin' Up" were played by request in this acoustic set, with Bruce's lyric book at the ready. Patti Scialfa joined in on harmonies on "Tougher Than the Rest" and "Thunder Road."

WAITIN' ON A SONNY DAY: Through what must have been the planets aligning for me, I obtained a pass to the post-show party at Sonny's. I arrived (after going through very tight security outside) and took my seat in the back dining room, which was set up with several small tables for four and some booths. There were about 60 people there. We were served a wonderful buffet-style meal, and the atmosphere was very relaxed. I didn't know what to expect. After about 40 minutes, in walks Kevin Buell with two guitar cases, then a music stand and the "big book o' lyrics." About 15 minutes after that, to my astonishment, in come Bruce, Patti, Terry [Magovern], and Jon Landau. I was floored. Bruce and Patti proceeded to the front of the small room and began making their way to the back again, wedding-reception style, stopping and chatting at each table. They were relaxed, signing autographs and taking pictures with everyone.

Not expecting a miracle, I hadn't even brought my camera up to Asbury. But on the way in to the cafe, my friend handed me one of those disposable cameras, "just in case." As Bruce made his way towards me, I kept saying to myself, "This is it—it's finally going to happen." He was warm and gracious, and looked me right in the eye when he was talking to me. He happily posed for a picture with me (which amazes me—he must get so sick of the same routine), then I wished him good luck on the tour and he moved on. I still can't believe it. I also got to speak at length with Patti about the tour, where I live (she asked), and my favorite song from her album ("Spanish Dancer"). As if it couldn't get any better, as I was talking with Patti, Bruce walked over to the front of the room and picked up a black and burnt-orange sunburst acoustic guitar, sat down on a stool and started flipping through the song book. Everyone got real quiet then....

On "Back in Your Arms" his voice was a little raspy from the earlier show, but it was haunting and beautiful. After the song he looked up and said, "Any requests"? I'm thinking, "Okay—here I am sitting 10 feet away from Bruce Springsteen and he's asking me for my request. When do I wake up?" Someone said "Thunder Road," and Bruce replied, "I'll do that one at the end." I asked for "Paradise" (figuring I'd impress him by not asking for an oldie), and he said, "'Paradise'... hmmm... not just yet...."

For the next song he looked over at Patti (who was sitting there at a table just like us, enjoying the show) and said, "You wanna help me out with one, Pats?" Bruce gave Patti his stool and got another one, and they did a duet on "Tougher Than the Rest."... After "I Wish I Were Blind" he said, "Let's do one for Asbury Park," and went into "Growin' Up." You can imagine the ecstasy that I was in. However, as hard as it was (and it was *hard*), I really wanted my best friend Tom, who had been waiting outside all this time, to share this once-in-a-lifetime experience. So during "Growin' Up" I tore myself away and ran outside and gave my friend my pass. He sprinted inside just in time to catch the rest of "Growin' Up," and then my all-time favorite, "Thunder Road." Call me a sucker, but I believe that an experience is worth so much more if you can share it with a friend. About 15 minutes after Bruce was done playing, he and Patti were out the front door and into the black Durango and off. And I was off to the one-hour-photo place for a picture which I will treasure for the rest of my life. It's a great picture—and neither Bruce nor I blinked! —*Mike Cannon*

JULY 30 (MORNING)
CONVENTION HALL
ASBURY PARK, NJ

SETLIST: *Acoustic warm-up:* Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street?/For You/Waitin' on a Sunny Day

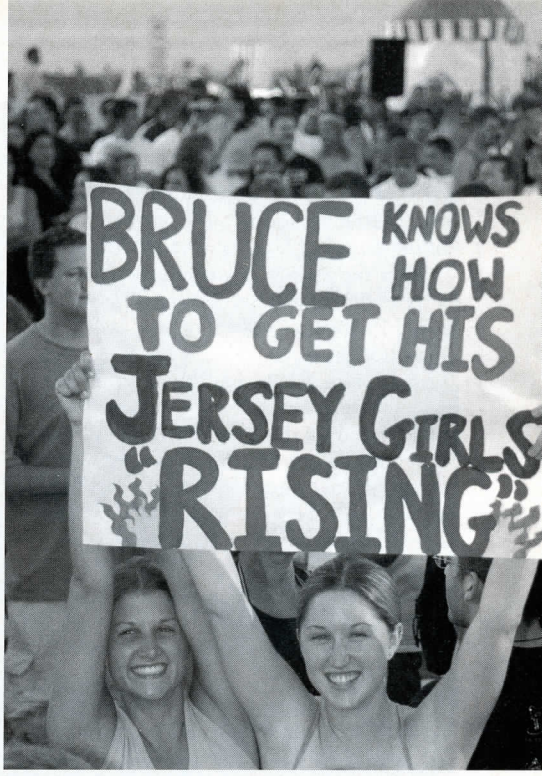
Electric broadcast: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Glory Days/Into the Fire

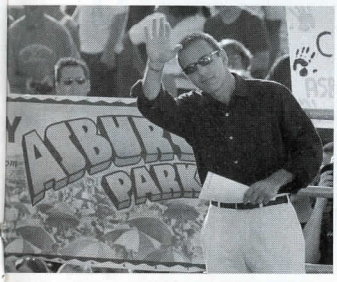
NOTES: NBC's *Today* show broadcast entirely from Asbury Park on the day of *The Rising*'s release, with Springsteen and the E Street Band playing a special Tuesday edition of the morning show's Summer Concert Series. Springsteen greeted the crowd inside Convention Hall around 7:20 a.m., with a bedraggled "Good morning.... it's early...." before warming up with a few acoustic numbers. Two songs from the apropos *Greetings from Asbury Park* LP were followed by a stripped-down acoustic "Waitin' on a Sunny Day" with Nils, Patti, Garry and Clarence. Only snippets of the warm-up were broadcast on *Today*. For the main set, broadcast live and in full an hour later, the entire E Street Band was onstage for three *Rising* tunes plus "Glory Days."

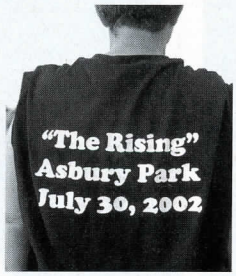
PRESS: "EARLY TASTES OF BRUCE'S 'RISING'." Richard Huff in the *New York Daily News:* Bruce Springsteen got [Asbury Park] out of bed early yesterday. The Jersey-bred rocker, who began his career in this seaside resort of 18,000 people three decades ago, returned for his first-ever performance on a TV morning show....

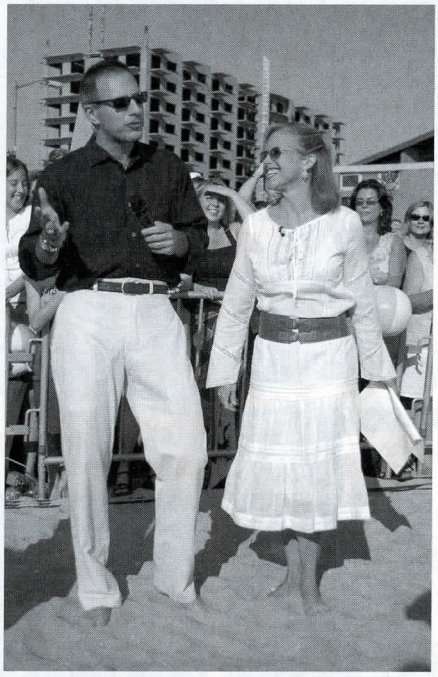
While millions watched Springsteen on TV, 2,500 very lucky fans got free seats in Convention Hall through contests and giveaways. And 15,000 people (according to an Asbury Park police estimate) showed up outside, knowing

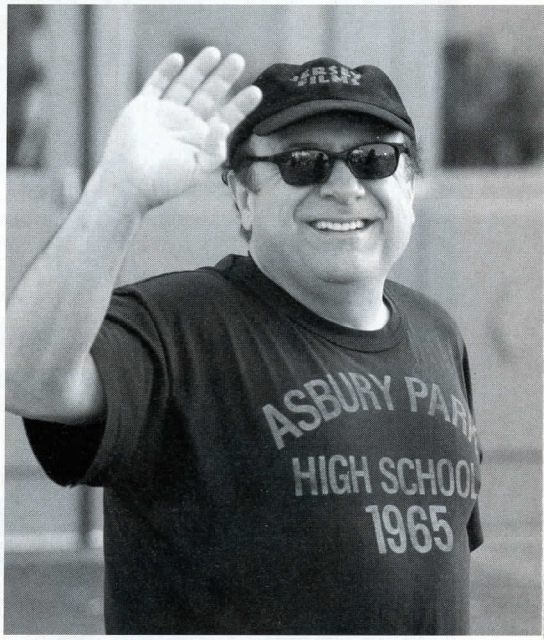
DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTOS


BRUCE KNOWS HOW TO GET HIS JERSEY GIRLS "RISING"




"The Rising"
Asbury Park
July 30, 2002




ASBURY PARK
HIGH SCHOOL
1965

that they would be able to experience the concert only via video screens and loudspeakers.

Security was tight but not overbearing. Asbury Park police were aided by the Monmouth County Sheriff's Department, bomb-sniffing dogs and regional first-aid units.

"With the amount of people we had, it was pretty smooth," said Sgt. George Corbin of the Asbury Park police. "We did have several heat-exhaustion problems."...

The *[Today]* show had been after Springsteen for years, and it went all out when his camp agreed to the date. *Today* shipped some 80 people to the Shore for the show, which executive producer Jonathan Wald said was the toughest one-day affair it has ever done. "It took an army, it was a mission," he said.....

When "Into the Fire" was over, Springsteen waved to the crowd and left the stage with Couric trailing him. There had been some talk that he might play another song on *Today*—the producers were prepared to fit one in—but Springsteen opted not to.

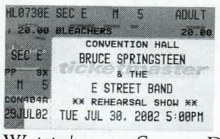
Shortly after the performance, though, to shouts of "Bruuuuuce," the band stepped onto a walkway that overlooked the crowd outside.

"I said to Katie, 'Let's go to it,'" Wald said, immediately cutting away to show Springsteen's acknowledgment of the crowd. "It's live TV."

The band returned backstage, while *Today* continued with spots on sandcastle building and surfing. Perhaps in a sign of the maturity of Springsteen's fans, when it was clear that he and the band would not return, members of the crowd, rather than pack up and leave, started to clean the beach.

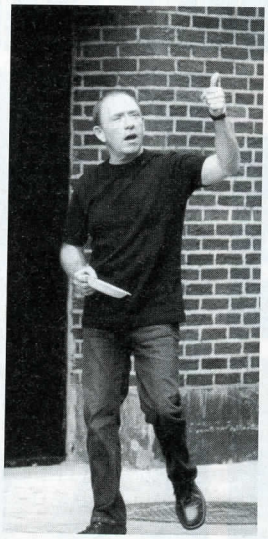
"I don't remember a show we've ever done that had that kind of energy," Lauer said afterward. "I don't think there's one better than this."...

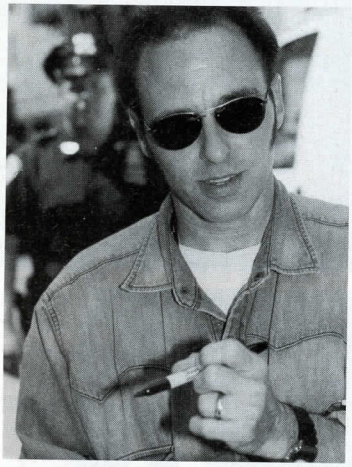
JULY 30 (EVENING) CONVENTION HALL ASBURY PARK, NJ

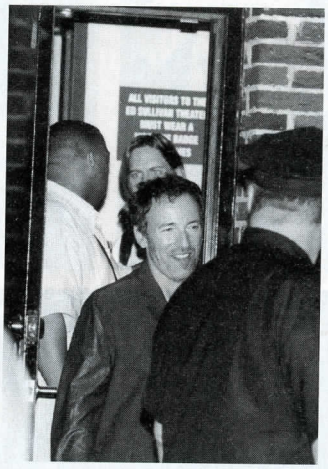


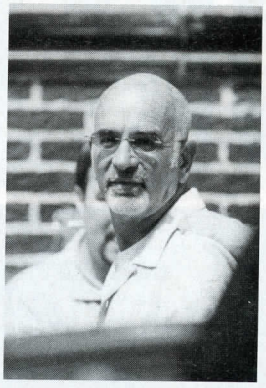
SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Cover Me/The Fuse/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Two Hearts/Mary's Place/My Hometown/Paradise/Countin' on a Miracle/American Skin (41 Shots)/Into the Fire (aborted)/Born in the U.S.A./Into the Fire//Thunder Road/Glory Days//My City of Ruins/Born to Run/Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: After the *Today* show, many fans stuck around and formed droplines in hope that rumors of another rehearsal show were true. They were. Hundreds of fans got the chance to buy tickets to the evening show after collecting stamps from participating Asbury Park mer-









E STREET CAM

WITH NEW YORK'S FINEST KEEPING WATCH, BRUCE AND THE BAND ARRIVE AT THE ED SULLIVAN THEATER FOR *THE LATE SHOW.*

GREG ALLEN PHOTOS

chants (in a scene one reader likened to *It's A Mad, Mad, Mad World*). The set included the long-absent "Cover Me" (last played 12/17/92) and the live premiere of "Paradise," with Garry Tallent on stand-up bass. "Into the Fire" brought Clarence's last stab at the bagpipes, on the first of two attempts at the song. It was aborted partway through, with Bruce saying, "Damn, I really wanted to play that one."

HEATING UP: It's amazing how a little more practice time, a much more enthusiastic crowd, and 106 degree indoor heat index (a la all those nights at the Pony back in the day) can improve a show. This was much better than the first rehearsal, despite the addition of "Cover Me." The encores are showing a lot more punch ("Born to Run" smoked, they just didn't go through the motions this time). But overall, the encores were the only punch—the rest of the show was somber and quiet. That was disappointing, but perhaps appropriate. The new songs are showing refinement, as was somewhat evident on the *Today* show broadcast, and are finding their place in the show structure.

—John Schlicher

AUGUST 1
ED SULLIVAN THEATER
NEW YORK, NY

SETLIST: The Rising//Lonesome Day

NOTES: Taping for the Springsteen's two appearances on *The Late Show with David Letterman* (broadcast August 1 and August 2) took place back-to-back on the same day. Bruce and the E Street Band performed one song for each show: "The Rising" for the August 1 broadcast, and "Lonesome Day" for August 2. For the latter, Springsteen sat down with Letterman as a non-musical guest as well.

PRESS: "E FOR EXCELLENT: BRUCE ROCKS DAVE." Don Kaplan in the *New York Post:* The Boss blasted David Letterman's ratings through the roof this week. Bruce Springsteen's appearance on Thursday's *Late Show with David Letterman* handed the show its best [local] Thursday-night ratings since last December—when Rudy Giuliani put in his last *Late Show* appearance as the mayor of New York.... Overall, Thursday night's Springsteen-juiced *Late Show* was seen in roughly 52 percent more area homes than the show's weekly average. Nationally, *The Late Show* averaged an overnight, metered-market rating of 4.0—its best performance on a Thursday night since last May's sweeps period.

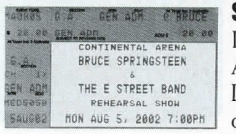
AUGUST 2
CONVENTION HALL
ASBURY PARK, NJ

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Jackson Cage/The Fuse/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Mary's Place/Paradise/Countin' on a Miracle/Backstreets/Into the Fire//My Hometown/Born to Run/Ramrod/Land of Hope and Dreams

DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

NOTES: With this night's Letterman show already taped, Bruce and the band are free for a final rehearsal at Convention Hall, after which the proceedings are moved to the Meadowlands. Includes the long-awaited return of "Jackson Cage" (last played 9/2/81), and the first appearances of "Badlands," "Backstreets," and "Ramrod" in the *Rising* set.

AUGUST 5
EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ
CONTINENTAL AIRLINES ARENA

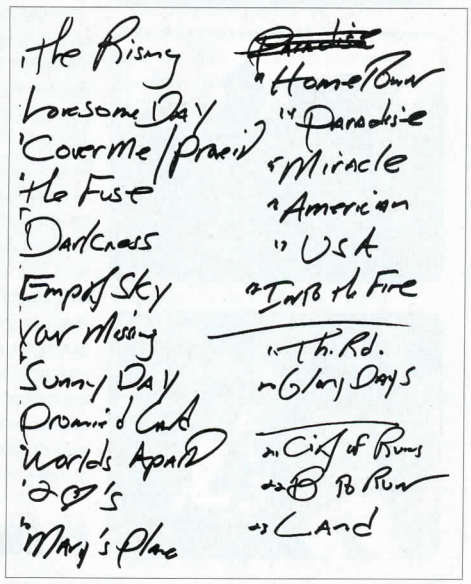


SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Prove It All Night/The Fuse/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Two Hearts/Badlands/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/American Skin (41 Shots)/Into the Fire//Born to Run/Ramrod//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: A dress rehearsal at the Meadowlands, where the tour proper will begin two nights later. Tickets were distributed to VIPs and to New Jersey Community FoodBank supporters, and roughly 200 of the fans waiting outside were let in as well. The arena wasn't even close to capacity for this trial run, with Springsteen remarking, "I haven't seen a crowd this size since Little Rock, Arkansas, on the last tour... and I think it's the same people!" Dropping out of the set: "Paradise" and "My Hometown."

SMALL CROWD, BIG NOISE: The CAA dress rehearsal was energetic and uplifting. The crowd of diehards seemed to enjoy the heavy emphasis on the new material, and Bruce seemed impressed with how well our sparse but enthusiastic crowd could respond in unison, especially considering the new album is less than a week old! We delivered unified choruses during the give-and-take of "Waitin' on a Sunny Day" and "Mary's Place," and echoed verses on practically every number. By the end of the 21-song show the crowd was drained and emotions ran deep. Many thanks to the FoodBank and Bruce for making this last rehearsal an evening show that a few of us (very) lucky and devoted fans were able to witness. *—Jon Kramer*

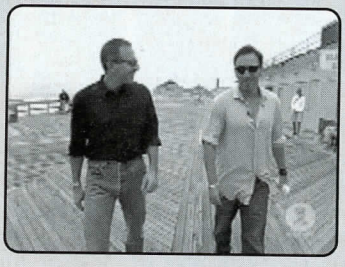
—Tour report compiled by Christopher Phillips



ON THE AIR WITH BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND THE

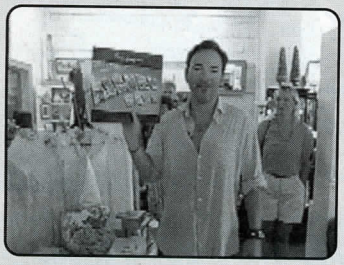
For many years Bruce Springsteen simply ignored television. He was turning down television offers almost from the start of his career. In October of 1975, the Dr. Pepper company wanted to sponsor a Springsteen television special. June of 1976 found Bruce declining a similar offer from Craig car stereos. For many years the "no television" policy was firmly in place. After breaking up the E Street Band, Bruce reconsidered and began to appear on television both solo and with his new band. Many regretted that he'd never documented the E Street Band with any television performances. Rather than wait until 1992 to appear on *Saturday Night Live*, why couldn't he have done it during the 1978 tour, or the 1980-81 tour? With their brief 1995 reunion, the E Street Band finally performed on the small screen, appearing on *The Late Show with David Letterman* to promote *Greatest Hits*.

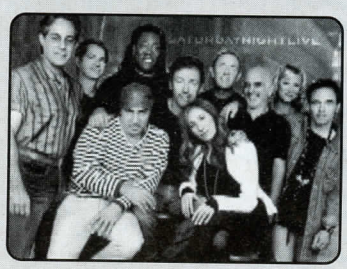
The passage of time and the subsequent more-permanent reunion has resulted in Bruce truly embracing the medium, not only appearing on various shows but also with the long awaited concert special that aired on HBO in 2001. Now, with the release of *The Rising* comes an unprecedented amount of television exposure for Bruce and the E Street Band. The week of the album's release it was almost impossible *not* to see Bruce on TV.



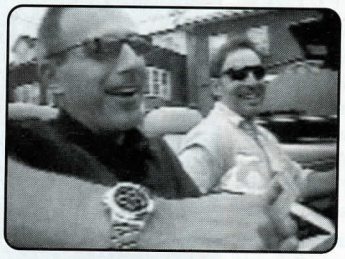
In a little over two months, Bruce Springsteen appeared on eleven television shows, not including the numerous news pieces like those on CNN, NBC Dateline and MSNBC. The E Street Band performed live on five of those shows. Prior to this year, the only other times they played live on television were that 1995 Letterman show, the HBO broadcast of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame concert, Bruce's own Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction on VH-1, the Disney Channel's broadcast of some live recordings from Sony Studios, and the *Live In New York City* HBO special.

In the interview with Ted Koppel on ABC's *Up Close*, Bruce said of the band, "I felt on this last tour it was the best E Street Band that I ever stood on stage with." Perhaps with that in mind he could no longer justify keeping them off the air, and has even planned what will be the band's most lengthy live television performance as the Television Tour continues: a live broadcast from Barcelona's Palau Sant Jordi on October 16. Also look for Springsteen and the band to make nice with Max's other boss toward the end of the 2002 tour: an appearance on NBC's *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* is currently planned for December 11.





BY ROBERT BADER

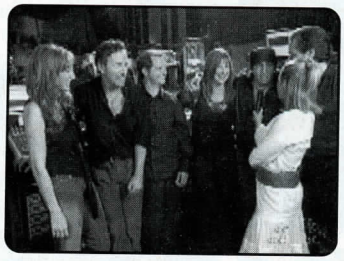


THE TODAY SHOW
(7/29/30) NBC

One day prior to broadcasting the entire show from the boardwalk in Asbury Park, *The Today Show* features two Bruce Springsteen pieces. Matt Lauer rides shotgun with Bruce on a motor tour of Asbury Park in a convertible. They visit local merchants, discuss the future of the city and end up at Sonny's Southern Cuisine for a live performance. Then Katie Couric offers an overview of Bruce's career that features interviews with several members of the E Street Band.

E STREET SPOTLIGHT: Clarence Clemons reminisces about Bruce telling ghost stories to the band in the early days; Danny Federici and Garry Tallent discuss early hardships, like sleeping in bathrooms and the Volkswagen bus. Steven Van Zandt, Roy Bittan and Nils Lofgren talk about the band's reunion, and Clarence and Max Weinberg talk about the breakup that preceded it.

ETC.: Portions of Bono's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction speech and an interview with Melissa Etheridge are also featured.



THE TODAY SHOW
(7/30/02) NBC

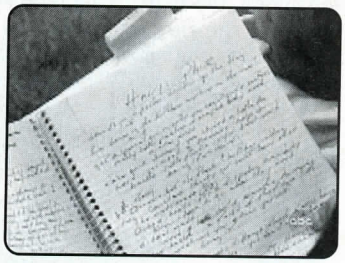
On the morning of *The Rising*'s release, Bruce and the band performed live from Asbury Park's Convention Hall. Along with live performances of "The Rising," "Lonesome Day," "Glory Days" and "Into the Fire" there were several live and taped segments featuring Bruce and the band. The most significant was Lauer's interview with Bruce, recorded at the Stone Pony a few days prior to the broadcast.

BOSS TALK: Asked how he felt about success at age 52 Bruce said, "I'm digging it." When Lauer mentioned the rumor that Bruce might be a candidate for the United States Senate, Bruce laid the rumor to rest. "That's a real job. The musician's life is to avoid real work for as long as you can." An additional brief portion of the interview was seen in a piece about the history of Asbury Park.

E STREET SPOTLIGHT: Steven Van Zandt was briefly interviewed in a segment about New Jersey's reputation, stating that, "Until Bruce, New Jersey was a punch line in an Abbott and Costello routine." In a live segment Katie Couric interviewed the entire E Street Band, mispronouncing Patti Scialfa's name and referring to Max Weinberg as "Max Weinberger." It was apparent that no one in the band is usually awake at 8 a.m.

ETC.: Other live segments featured brief clips of Bruce's early morning impromptu acoustic performance and the surprise appearance of the band on the Convention Hall balcony.

"IN SOME FASHION" COUNT: Three.



NIGHTLINE
(7/30/02) ABC

UP CLOSE
(7/30/02 AND 7/31/02) ABC

Ted Koppel's interview with Bruce aired in three parts. On July 30, *Nightline* and its new companion program *Up Close* were both devoted entirely to the Springsteen interview. The July 31 *Up Close* aired the conclusion, which also filled the entire show. The July 30 *Nightline* broadcast concluded with an acoustic performance of "Empty Sky." All three shows included numerous clips from the Convention Hall rehearsals. Bruce and the band were shown rehearsing "My City of Ruins," "Countin' on a Miracle," "Into the Fire," "Mary's Place," "Two Hearts," "Worlds Apart," "The Promised Land," "Further On (Up the Road)," "My Love Will Not Let You Down," "The Rising," "Backstreets," and "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out."

BOSS TALK: The interview, which is certainly one of the best Bruce has ever given, was conducted in various settings at his home. On the subject of being the voice of his audience Bruce said, "The greatest pop music has been music of liberation. Bob Marley, Bob Dylan, Elvis Presley, James Brown, Public Enemy, the Clash [and] the Sex Pistols... liberated an enormous amount of people to be who they are.... The best pop music reaches all the different parts of your life.... That's what I was concerned with. I wanted to address your family. I wanted to address your country. I wanted to address your Saturday night in the bar when you're dancing and having a good time. Your relationships with the person that you love and the people that you love.... I found all of this inside of pop music.... You find your voice in that audi-

E STREET BAND: THE 2002 TELEVISION TOUR

ence. You have to have that connection." Asked about his father's reaction to his success, Bruce quoted his dad as saying, "I'll never tell anyone what to do again."

In a rare look into his work process Bruce and Koppel randomly flipped through his notebook from *The Rising* sessions. Bruce told him that only two songs from the sessions didn't make it onto the album. Koppel then got Bruce to recite some lyrics from one of the outtakes, "Harry's Place":

> Downtown hipsters drinking up the drug line,
> I'm down in the kitchen working in the coal mine.
> Got a special sin mister, you can't quite confess,
> Messy little problem, maybe baby needs a new dress.
> Razorback diamond shined a little too hard,
> Need a hammer, help your hand,
> Maybe a little trouble in your back yard.
> Bring it on down to Harry's Place.

E STREET SPOTLIGHT: The third installment of the interview focused mostly on the E Street Band. After mentioning that the entire band had managed to survive in a business where many other bands had lost members, Bruce discussed the importance of having his old friends in his life and what made him take the band on the road again. "We're playing for a generation of people who haven't seen us and we're going to go out and we're going to be better than we ever were."

Asked about his relationship with Steven, Bruce said, "I cannot be with him for five minutes without laughing." Of Clarence he said, "I get enormous strength from watching him during the course of the evening."

Each member of the band was also interviewed. Max echoed Bruce's sentiments about the approach to the live show: "We're very aware of going on stage and playing each show as if it's our last show." But Nils summed up playing in the E Street Band better than anyone. "It's like playing in the Super Bowl, and you're the home team, and you always win."

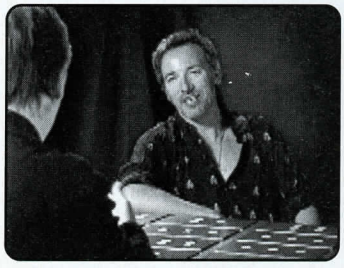
"IN SOME FASHION" COUNT: Two (7/30). On July 30, Bruce broke his own record (previously set in the Bob Costas interview) by saying "in some fashion" five times in one broadcast day. He required two networks to accomplish this feat.

THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN (8/1/02 AND 8/2/02) CBS

The Late Show tapes two episodes on Thursdays, so it is not uncommon for bands to appear on consecutive nights. For the Thursday show, Bruce and the band performed "The Rising." The Friday show featured Bruce being interviewed by Letterman and a performance of "Lonesome Day." By Bruce's standards

he's almost a regular on Letterman's shows, having appeared three times prior to these two appearances.

BOSS TALK: In a very loose and casual interview Bruce gets as many laughs as Dave—which seems to make Letterman very happy. When Letterman asked Bruce if he ever found himself singing along when his own songs came on the car radio, Bruce countered, "Are you doing comedy bits when you're driving in from Connecticut?"



THE TABLE (8/20/02) MTV 2

Bruce sat opposite host Kurt Loder at a table with various topics printed on tiles. In most cases the topics offered little indication of what the question actually was. (Bruce discovered during the interview that the tiles were not removable.) The premise and the format were a bit silly, but the resulting interview covered an unusually wide range of topics in half an hour. When Loder asked Bruce to pick a topic from the table Bruce replied, "I'll pick all the easy ones. I'll let you pick 'em." Loder and Bruce discussed the E Street Band reunion, the breakup of the band, the World Trade Center attack, war in Afghanistan and civil rights.

BOSS TALK: Much of the interview was devoted to music. Bruce revealed that his mother took him to his first concert at the Steel Pier in Atlantic City, New Jersey and that he saw Chubby Checker and Anita Bryant. Other musicians discussed included Sir Mix-A-Lot, whose early rap records Bruce described as "hilarious"; Britney Spears ("She was very nice to my daughter"); and Abba ("'Dancing Queen' was a great record.") Asked about the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Bruce recalled how honored he was to induct Roy Orbison and Bob Dylan. Of his own induction he said, "Reggie Jackson, when he was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame said… 'It's not important whether his name came at the top of the list… but on the day when that list is called, at some point down the line they get to your name.' That's a pretty nice feeling."

On the subject of *The Rising* turning up on the internet prior to its release, Bruce laughed while saying, "I'm from the old school. I believe it's theft." Asked if he felt that there was too much anger in the music of bands like Korn and Limp Bizkit, Bruce said, "I don't really question it. I've got my own darkness to deal with." Talking about the hit MTV show *The Osbournes*, Loder asked Bruce what a reality show of life in the Springsteen home would be like. Bruce's answer: "It would be too boring to watch."

"IN SOME FASHION" COUNT: Significant because Bruce is saying "in some fashion" in a different fashion: one "in that fashion"; one "in fashion"; one "out of fashion."

SPRINGSTEEN: RISING UP (8/28/02) VH-1

This half hour special is an extended version of the motor tour of Asbury Park with Matt Lauer that aired on *The Today Show* on July 29. The live performance of "My City of Ruins" from Sonny's Southern Cuisine is shown in a longer clip than on *Today* as well. Also included are additional portions of Lauer's interview from The Stone Pony that aired on July 30.

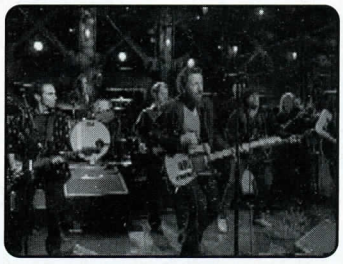
BOSS TALK: Much of the conversation focuses on the history of Asbury Park and the redevelopment of the city. Bruce takes Lauer to Georgies, a bar which he'd checked out the day before and found to be fairly deserted. But word of Bruce's visit got out and they were greeted by an enthusiastic mob, prompting Lauer to remark that "I could be completely naked right now and no one would even know I'm here." Seeing these fans fill a normally empty bar in the middle of the day just to greet Bruce, Lauer remarked, "I don't care how many years you're in the business, Bruce. That's cool." Seeming almost uncomfortable with all of the adulation, at one point Bruce encouraged some fans to get Lauer's autograph.

Entering a local antique store, Bruce asks the customers, "Are you harmless patrons or wild fans?" Finding a vinyl LP of *Greetings from Asbury Park*, Bruce holds the record up to the camera and remarks, "This is in an antique store."

ETC.: Driving past Convention Hall, Bruce reminisced about seeing The Who open for Herman's Hermits when he was 15. That show occurred during the Who's first U.S. tour in the summer of 1967, when Bruce was just shy of his 18th birthday.

THE MTV VIDEO MUSIC AWARDS (8/29/02) MTV

The MTV Video Music Awards was broadcast live from Radio City Music Hall, but Bruce and the E Street Band performed "The Rising" to open the show from a different location. The Rose Center for Earth and Space at the Museum of Natural History's Hayden Planetarium provided a unique backdrop for an outdoor performance in a steady rain. *Sopranos* star James Gandolfini introduced the band. After the broadcast of "The Rising" (and one run-through of the song prior to the broadcast) Bruce and the band played ten more songs for the small invited audience, commenting, "We're not on MTV now, we're just on Boss TV. We got a little private show."



SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE (10/5/02) NBC

Most of the live television appearances by Bruce and the band happened prior to the start of the tour, but the *MTV Video Music Awards* and *Saturday Night Live*—both broadcast from New York—were done during the tour. The season premiere of *SNL* happened to be on a night off in between the Boston and Philadelphia shows, making it far more convenient than the *VMAs*, which required the band to fly to New York in between shows in San Jose and St. Louis.

After playing the standard band arrangement of "Lonesome Day," Bruce returned without the band for his first solo piano version of "You're Missing." By all accounts Bruce's second appearance on *SNL* was far more musically satisfying than his 1992 visit, in which his new band might have been, perhaps, a little too new.

ETC.: Host Matt Damon appeared in sketch set at a Springsteen show, and an E Streeter was mentioned by Jimmy Fallon during the "Weekend Update" segment, in a piece about the New Jersey Senate campaign: "Little Steven, your country needs you."

AND THE HEALING HAS BEGUN
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND THE E STREET BAND
THE RISING TOUR FIRST U.S. LEG • AUGUST / SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2002

OUTSIDE THE TACOMA DOME, before Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band's eighth show of *The Rising* tour, another group was hard at work, intent on saving souls. Clean-cut youths handed out flyers for an upcoming "Christian Rock" concert, as a preacher with a "Jesus Saves" sign and a bullhorn berated the last few stragglers on their way into the arena.

"You're walking away from the Lord.... Be careful what you feed your spirit! It won't be a revival you'll find inside the Tacoma Dome tonight!"

Nice try, fella, but you picked the wrong night.

Springsteen has dropped the overt preacher shtick from the '99-2000 run, but its spirit remains. Two years after the E Street Band's reunion tour, their performances and arrangements are fueled more than ever by Bruce's observation that, in his songwriting, "the verses are the blues, the chorus is the gospel." And with *The Rising*, the ongoing ministry of rock 'n' roll has been strengthened by new songs of spiritual transcendence and redemption, invoking prayers for strength, hope, love, and a busload of faith. Along with the addition of Sister Soozie Tyrell's mighty vocals filling out the choir, the gospel spirit is more evident than ever. Springsteen and the E Street Band may not be saving souls on *The Rising* tour, but they're working hard to help heal them.

With one show per city, without exception, from August 7 through December 13—the "barnstorming" tour is a broad sweep with a tight focus. As opposed to the 1999-2000 tour, which revisited Bruce's vast body of work, the *Rising* tour is emphatically driven by a new record and Springsteen's desire to make it heard. The shows progressed dramatically in the first two months when it comes to proficiency and spontaneity, but Springsteen hasn't backed off one bit from the new material. From the come-on-up invitational of "The Rising," through the devastatingly beautiful duo of "Empty Sky" and "You're Missing," to the "My City of Ruins" encore, *The Rising* goes a long way toward establishing the tone and providing the framework for the show. The general structure may feel like a holdover from the reunion tour, but the dominance of new material is largely a welcome change. By the spring of 2000, despite the thrill of hearing E Street Band classics in peak form, many Bruce fans were itching for something new. Bruce was too, judging by the numerous song premieres as the tour drew to a close. Springsteen's "new rock voice" that was hinted at onstage (with "Land of Hope and Dreams" in 1999 and "American Skin" in 2000) is on full display in 2002, making good on Springsteen's promise of "life... right now!"

Springsteen played at least 11 of *The Rising*'s 15 tracks each night, and one had the sense that if he thought he could get away with playing all 15, he would. At first, it seemed only Springsteen's newfound "brevity" kept them all from finding a place in the set—most of the August concerts clocked in at a gotta-put-my-foot-down two-and-a-half-hours, and *The Rising* made up exactly half of a standard 22-song set. For most of the leg, it was the same 11 songs each night. But as things loosened up in September, "Further On (Up the Road)" had its 2002 premiere, and "Nothing Man" was performed live for the first time ever. With that pair turning up late in the leg, and "Paradise" performed earlier at the Asbury Park rehearsals, "Let's Be Friends" remains the only *Rising* song yet to be performed before an audience. With emphasis on *yet*—"Let's Be Friends" was soundchecked in early October, so it's probably only a matter of time.

When it comes to the new songs, this first leg was as much about refining their live performance as making them heard. Much of the satisfaction of the tour so far has been in watching the E Street Band rise to a challenge before an audience, processing so much new material all at once. That has also leveled the playing field for Soozie's sake, and her integration into the band has been a seamless one. Though Bruce and the band were still finding their legs into October, the *Rising* songs came a long way in the first month alone. With the album's title track, even a national television audience could witness light years of progress in a single month—between the rocky performance on the July 30 *Today* show and the barnburner that opened the MTV Video Music Awards on August 29.

As for the rest of the set, with so much emphasis on the new E Street Band material, Springsteen seemed to have forgotten the records he recorded without them. Not a single song was performed from *The Ghost of Tom Joad*, *Human Touch*, or *Lucky Town*, and only one from *Tunnel of Love*, late in the game. But the *Rising* cuts were balanced out by staples from the band's catalog that became regulars for much of this first leg: Springsteen found a new appetite for *Born in the U.S.A.* hits, and an emphasis on *Darkness on the Edge of Town* linked that 1978 record to the new one. The rigidly structured set eventually opened up to allow for more surprises and rarities, too—it just took a while to get there.

THE OPENING AUGUST DATES found Springsteen playing it close to the vest. Surely it's no accident that the *Rising* tour began in places most affected by events of 9/11, and the tour launch in New Jersey, Washington D.C., and New York City felt like a fitting beginning. But despite emotions running high, it wasn't realistic to look for consummate performances. A struggle on opening night should be considered par for the course (technical difficulties and poor pacing have generally been the rule on tours past), though the homestate start at Continental Airlines Arena brought higher expectations. Bruce moved quickly to refine the set for the second show, yanking an out-of-place "Two Hearts" and reordering the encore. But after the Washington D.C. concert the changes stopped. What never took place once on the '99-2000 tour—out of its 132 shows, not one setlist was the same as any other—happened two, three, and four nights in a row, as Springsteen presented an ultra-consistent show in D.C., New York City, Cleveland and Detroit. While fans figured the *Rising* tour's one-night-stands might make for fewer variations than last time around, the static setlist still came as a disappointment. Besides the repeat customer's hope for spontaneity and variety, there was an underlying, nagging feeling that the basic setlist wasn't yet what it should be, that it was simply too soon to settle in.

The August 18 Las Vegas stop had an it's-now-or-never feel. After all, if Sin City couldn't shake the setlist up with a "Lucky Town" or a "Roll of the Dice"... if playing just off the strip the week of the 25th anniversary of Elvis Presley's death didn't bring a Kingly one-off, it'd be hard to imagine a better reason would come along. "Viva Las Vegas" was the answer. It didn't blow the show wide open; the hopeful fan who brought a fuzzy pair of dice knew not to wait another song before throwing them onstage, and the bulk of the Vegas set was standard. But by merely showing up—it didn't hurt that the song clearly kicked the energy of

BY CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS

JEFFREY SNYDER PHOTO

the encores up a notch—"Viva" opened up a world of possibilities.

The shake-ups continued from there, as the Portland show on August 20 brought "Backstreets" and "Atlantic City" into the set. On August 21 in Tacoma, Bruce took a lesson from Vegas by amping up the encore, with high-energy versions of "Dancing in the Dark"—a real keeper in its giddy new rock arrangement—and "Ramrod." By the end of August, fans were relieved that Springsteen was clearly open to rethinking the set as the tour went along.

In September, the floodgates opened. Perhaps not wanting to be outdone by the Rolling Stones' deep catalog digging, or maybe just confident enough with the new material to branch out, Springsteen brought back some of the choice classics that blew minds on the last tour. And a few more holy-shit obscurities for good measure, including solo piano renditions of chestnuts like "Incident on 57th Street" and "For You"; long-lost tracks such as "I'm a Rocker" and "Jackson Cage"; and just-for-you covers like "Kansas City." Unexpected additions like these gave middle America the kind of special moments too often reserved for Springsteen performances closer to home. As the leg swung back to Boston, Philly, and Buffalo in October, there was the sense that anything could happen. The shows lengthened, breaking the three-hour barrier in Boston, and the flurry of rarities continued with "Kitty's Back," "Streets of Philadelphia," "Lost in the Flood"... all without backing off from the nightly *Rising* quota.

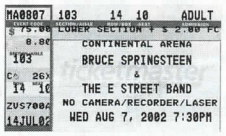
The setlist never tells the full story: set changes and rarities don't make a great concert in and of themselves. But it's a good gauge of Springsteen and the band's confidence level, and set refinements on the latter half of the leg—letting go of "Thunder Road," replacing "Bobby Jean" with "She's the One"—have improved the set's unity and flow. While the show has yet to develop the well-paced sense of tension-and-release that mark Springsteen's greatest performances, his lack of complacency bodes well as the tour continues.

Two months in, *The Rising* tour can still be considered in its early stages, especially factoring in that three-week break in the middle of the first leg. The original press release for the tour made no secret of plans to follow this barnstorming run with longer stands, and Springsteen himself has discussed the continuation of the tour well into 2003.

"We haven't done just one-nighters in a long time," he said in a recent interview, "so we're going out one night in each city, and boom, boom, boom, boom, boom... We're going to try and get out to everybody. And then we're going to come back and play more extensively, particularly in Europe... where we have a tremendous audience, and we're definitely going to come back around and play more extensively when we come back.... I would imagine the tour is going to last a year, I would think. To get around and do what we do and cover our audience, which we try to do our best with, it would be a little while."

Say amen, somebody.

AUGUST 7
CONTINENTAL AIRLINES ARENA
EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ



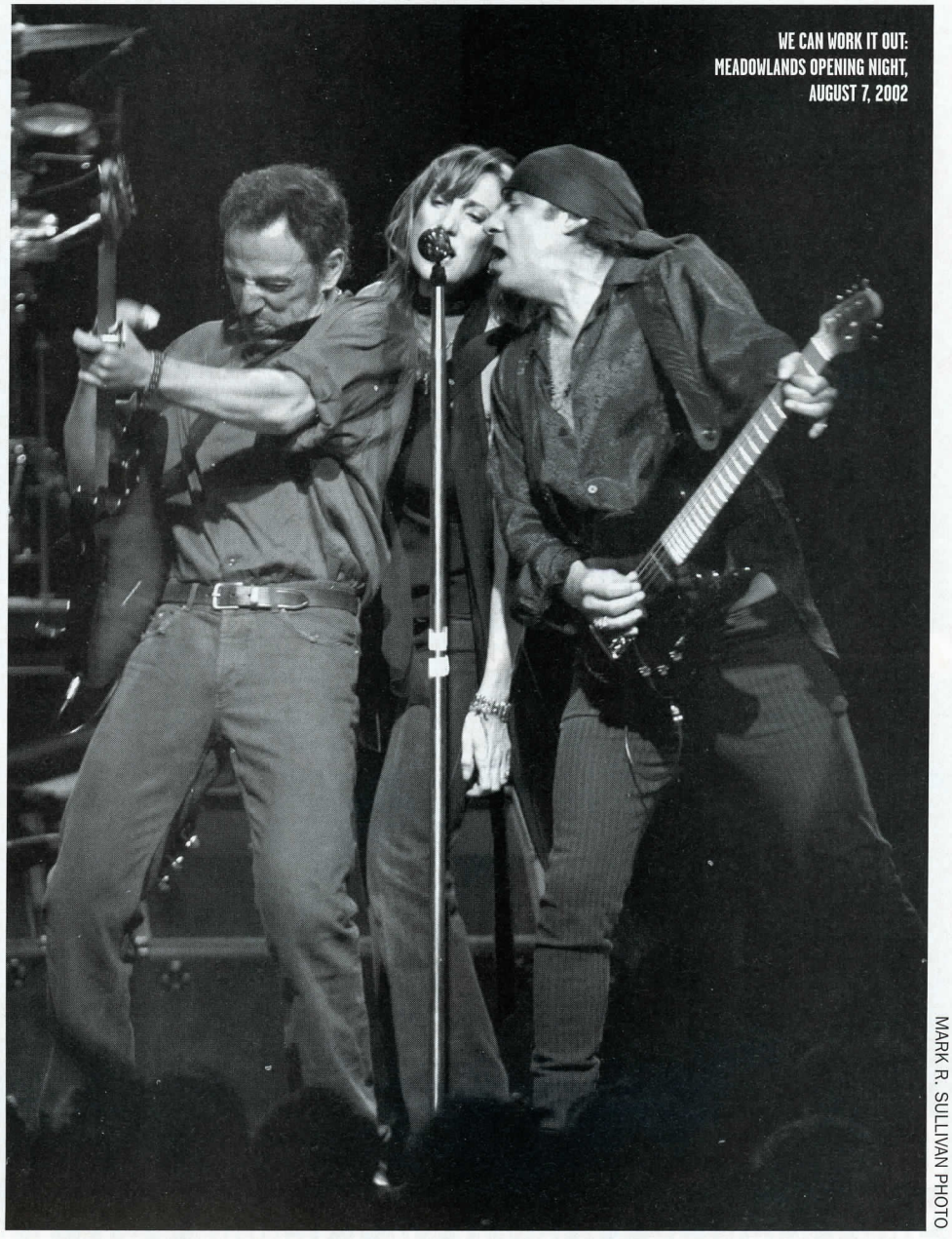
SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Prove It All Night/The Fuse/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Two Hearts/Badlands/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/American Skin (41 Shots)/Into the Fire//Born to Run/Glory Days/Thunder Road//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: The opening night crowd needs no prompting to sing along on "Waitin' on a Sunny Day," and Springsteen tells the audience: "I'm impressed!" The song was dedicated to *Rising* producer Brendan O'Brien. Springsteen also tried some storytelling during "Mary's Place," which would be dropped after this show. In the crowd: Hank Azaria, Pat Riley, Spike Lee, Joe Piscopo, Elisabeth Shue.

PRESS: "'RISING' STARS: BRUCE AND BAND OPEN TOUR AT MEADOWLANDS." Kelly-Jane Cotter in the *Asbury Park Press*: Springsteen and the E Street Band were well prepared for the scrutiny of opening night, having staged several rehearsals in Asbury Park. Fans were prepared, too, and had already developed special rhythmic claps and fist pumps for the new songs.

Springsteen shed light on "Mary's Place," the CD's most bubbly track, by reminiscing about a party at his cousins' house. He was 12, and the cousins, who "always won all the dance contests at the Shore," were about 15 or 16, as were all their friends. The pre-teen Springsteen rolled up the rug and danced, then sat back and pined for the girls, who seemed so sophisticated and unattainable....

"SPRINGSTEEN CHALLENGES HIS AUDIENCE AS "THE RISING" TOUR



WE CAN WORK IT OUT: MEADOWLANDS OPENING NIGHT, AUGUST 7, 2002

MARK R. SULLIVAN PHOTO

OPENS." Gary Graff for Reuters: With his new album, *The Rising*, sitting at No. 1 on the *Billboard* charts, Springsteen and his E Street Band dedicated half of their 22-song show to fresh material, stitching it between older favorites and weaving the two together to create a two-and-a-half-hour song cycle about life in the post-September 11 world.

In that way it was reminiscent of Springsteen's 1988 concerts in support of his then-current album *Tunnel of Love*. With a wealth of new songs and a few musical curve balls, the New Jersey rocker challenged his hometown audience and recast his course as a performer with a set that, while marathon by most standards, weighed in as one of the shortest tour productions in Springsteen's career.

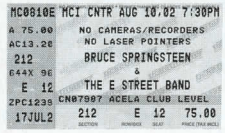
That move did prompt some disappointed reactions from many of the 20,000-plus crowd as they left the arena. Some of those fans spent the entire night standing on the general admission floor level, another new wrinkle in this year's Springsteen's presentation....

"A STIFF OPENING WITH STELLAR MOMENTS." Anthony DeCurtis in *Rolling Stone*: ...The whole thing felt important but wasn't very much fun. The vagaries of opening night were part of the problem. Half of the show's 22 songs were from *The Rising*, and the band isn't yet comfortable with all that new material. Equipment problems also cropped up; the tech crew were onstage so much you could have mistaken them for bandmembers....

"SPRINGSTEEN GETS BOLD, YET HE STRUGGLED FOR THE BALANCE..." Steve Morse in the *Boston Globe*: ...[Springsteen] struggled to balance the seriousness of the new material with the more hedonistic, house-party standards.... A specific example of his difficulty in balancing the extremes of this set came when he launched into two of the most acutely painful new songs, "Empty Sky" and "You're Missing." "We're going to have a good time, but we need you to be real quiet for the next couple of songs," he said. But sensing the crowd's discomfort, he then talked of how "I took that last calming [piss] before I came out." The shtick was kind of funny, but awkward.... The constancy of the new tunes suggested that Springsteen was trying too hard to force-feed them to the public, as though he were asking them to "take their medicine," as one fan remarked privately. It was a kind of paternalistic, preacher role that made you queasy at times....

One also has to wonder how this set will evolve.... right now, he has to do some fine-tuning before he achieves a balance that works better than last night's debut.

AUGUST 10
MCI CENTER
WASHINGTON, DC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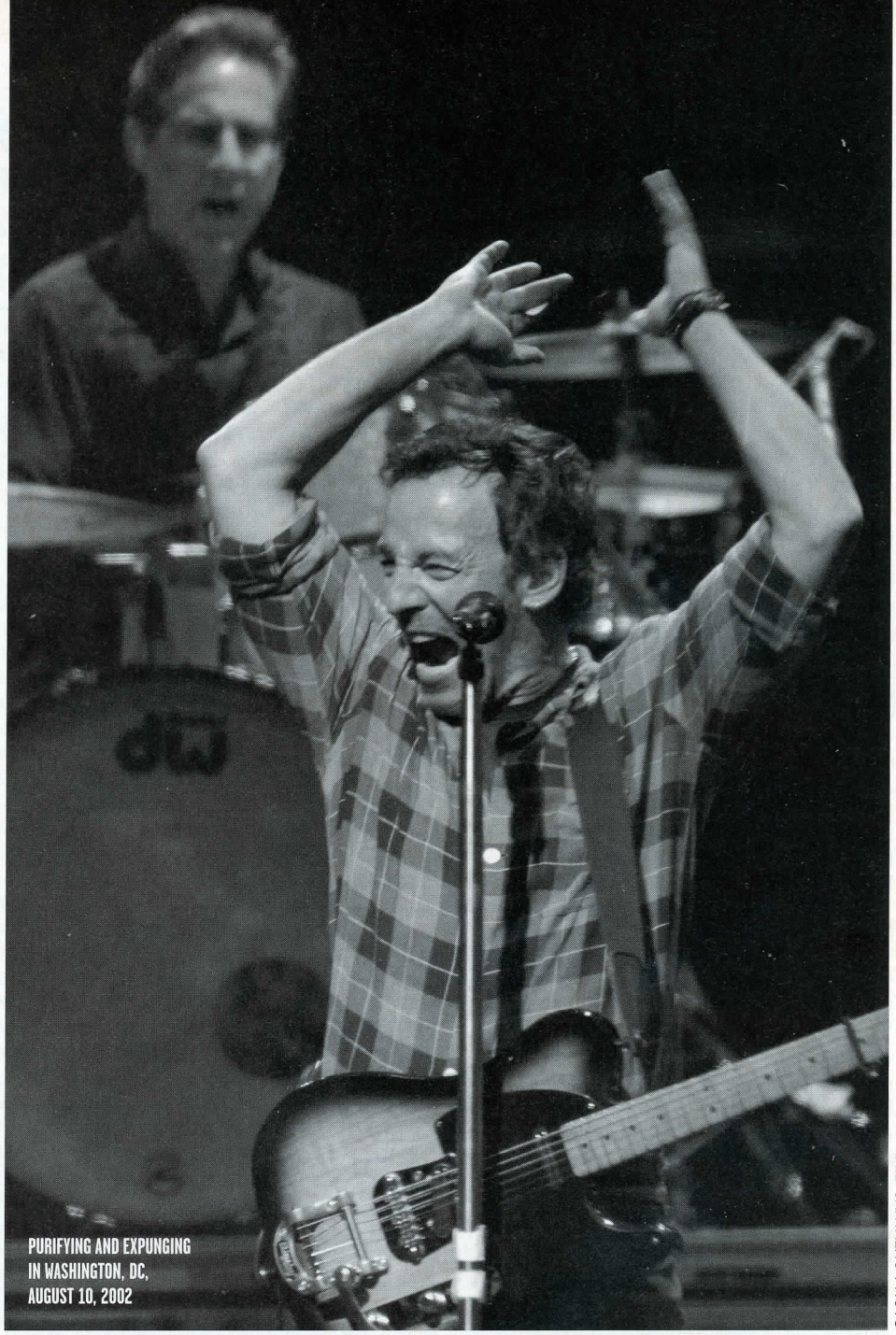
SOUNDCHECK: Still concentrating on getting the new material down, the soundcheck included "Lonesome Day," "Empty Sky," "You're Missing," "Mary's Place," and "Waitin' on a Sunny Day."



PURIFYING AND EXPUNGING IN WASHINGTON, DC, AUGUST 10, 2002

DEB CARVALHO PHOTO

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Prove It All Night/The Fuse/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Bobby Jean/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/American Skin (41 Shots)/Into the Fire//Thunder Road/Glory Days/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams

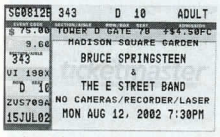
NOTES: The tour premiere of "Bobby Jean," in place of "Two Hearts" (which was on the setlist). Also on the setlist but not played was "Backstreets" (after "Countin' on a Miracle"). "Always nice to be here in our nation's capitol," Springsteen said, "where there's always a job of purifying and expunging to be done! Maybe a little for myself, while I'm at it." Springsteen adds a cautionary speech about civil liberties before "Born in the U.S.A." In the crowd: Ted Koppel.

PRESS: "THANKS, BOSS: BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN RISES TO THE OCCASION AT MCI CENTER." David Segal in the *Washington Post*: Lordy, lordy, we needed that. We needed Bruce Springsteen even more than we thought, and we thought we needed him a lot.... It was as if he had decided he wouldn't merely assert that the country will recover from the wounds of Sept. 11—one theme of his latest CD, *The Rising*—but that he would enact that recovery before our eyes.... Springsteen, above all else, is a performer preternaturally connected to his audience. On Saturday night he found the right combination of first aid and entertainment....

GETTING BETTER: No huge surprises (and still the set lacks Bruce's typical cohesion), but the show was a notch above Jersey, getting noticeably better already in several key areas. The setlist was almost identical to the NJ show,

except for a few minor improvements. The far more appropriate "Bobby Jean" replaced that unremarkable "Two Hearts"; and "Thunder Road" and "Born to Run" swapped places in the encores, making for a somewhat better structure for the encore. Also, there were a few technical difficulties in NJ which seemed to be evened out. The encores were much stronger in D.C., with a powerful "My City of Ruins" and an exuberant "Glory Days" as two highlights of the show. Bruce had so much fun on stage for "Glory Days," it had the feel of those post-"Land of Hope and Dreams" show closers of the last tour, complete with crowd singalong, false endings and endless glorious fooling around. —*Magnus Lauglo*

AUGUST 12
MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
NEW YORK, NY



SETLIST: Same as 8/10

NOTES: A post-show bonus makes its first appearance in New York City: a prerecorded video performance of "Countin' on a Miracle," in a stripped-down, completely rearranged solo version. In the crowd: James Gandolfini (and numerous other Sopranos), Kurt Loder, Steven Spielberg, Billy Joel, Spike Lee, Kevin Bacon, Kyra Sedgwick, Peter Bogdanovich, Hillary Swank, Chad Lowe, Al Leiter.

PRESS: "SPRINGSTEEN ROCKS THE GARDEN." Dan Aquilante in the *New York Post*: Where better than New York City's Madison Square Garden to conjure the ghosts that haunt the songs of Bruce Springsteen's album *The Rising*? At this concert Monday, less than a week after the man and his E Street Band fired up the tour on the Jersey side at the Meadowlands, the performance was honed to a razor's edge that carried the 20,000 watching and listening on an emotional roller coaster.... Even though the package might have looked the same on paper, the MSG concert was tighter and the songs packed a harder emotional punch considering they were being performed less than two miles from the World Trade Center site.

That was very apparent during the concert's quiet songs "Empty Sky" and "You're Missing" offered early in the set. The fans at the Garden were visibly shaken by the power of these songs. Nearby, two women dabbed tears from their eyes, and a New York City firefighter in the next seat turned and said, "That felt like a punch to my chest." ...

DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

GARDEN OF SIGHS: By the New York City show, I had gotten used to the idea of the set being pretty much the same each night (although I was privately hoping for "Darlington County" in the encore), and was able to enjoy the show without obsessing about the setlist. While many of us aren't entirely satisfied with the pacing of the show, it seems unlikely to change any time soon, and you just have to take what you get. In truth, what we get is a very strong, enjoyable show.

The NYC crowd was all in all very good, but the loud cheering after the "I want an eye for an eye" line in "Empty Sky" made me, for one, feel very uncomfortable, and I almost wondered if Bruce would say anything after the song. He chose not to, probably wisely.... "American Skin" was received pretty well where I sat, but according to fans I spoke to there was scattered booing in some sections. Interestingly, the quieter songs seem to keep the audience's attention more easily than the loud-but-slow rockers like "Countin' on a Miracle" and "The Fuse."

"My City of Ruins" was played to perfection, and is quickly becoming a highlight of the high-energy encores. When Bruce sang the "Come on, rise up" line, the crowd joined him and it was just about the most powerful moment of the evening. Hearing songs like "Countin' on a Miracle," "Into the Fire" and "You're Missing" in the Garden was a tremendously powerful experience for me. I can only imagine what it must have been like for those whose lives were affected directly by the events of 9/11. —*Magnus Lauglo*

AUGUST 14
GUND ARENA
CLEVELAND, OH

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Lost in the Flood" and "Atlantic City."

SETLIST: Same as 8/10 and 8/12

NOTES: The first show after "the big three" is the first of several to find the arena not full to capacity, with last-minute tickets plentiful outside the venue. Following Bruce and Steve's back-and-forth routine at the mic during "Glory Days," the microphone crashed to the floor—which made for some extra silliness, Bruce's "testing... testing..." getting plenty of laughs.

PRESS: "BOSS STILL IN CHARGE, RISES RIGHT TO THE TOP WITH 9/11-INSPIRED SET." John Soeder in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*: In this summer of CEO scandals, isn't it reassuring to know there's at least one Boss we can still count on?... At the first three concerts Springsteen reached out to places where terror hit especially close to home nearly one year ago. Last night we got the first glimpse of how his redemptive, post-9/11 rock 'n' roll would play in the rest of the country. Suffice it to say Springsteen rose to the occasion.... From the first song to the last, "Land of Hope and Dreams," the music promised deliverance—and for the most part, Springsteen and his sidekicks delivered.

HI, MY NAME IS...: Tickets were everywhere, out front and online the day of the show. In my

WHAT'S THAT

THERE WERE TIMES ON the *Rising* tour's first leg, as when the show closed with "Land of Hope and Dreams," when it felt like a nostalgia tour—nostalgia for a mere three years ago. But with half of the tour regulars coming from a new album, and some choice hits from the past resurrected after years on the shelf, Soozie Tyrell ain't the only new kid in town. Here's a look at some standards from the new repertoire so far.

The Rising: Following a quick "good evening" from Bruce, the fitting invitation of the tour's title track opens the show on a nightly basis. Stick-clicks from Max count off the tempo, and rather than a "one-two-three-four!," a booming bass drum, or an amped-up guitar, it's the sound of lush strings that first welcome you to *The Rising* tour. Unless you had taken a shotgun to your TV over the summer, you couldn't miss seeing this one live a few times over, so you know the deal: synth-heavy to start, with the muscular power of the full E Street Band soon driving it straight into the storm. By the end of the leg, Springsteen finally stopped gasping and twitching to sing those "dream of life" lines himself, figuring out at last that this is what backup singers are for—and as it happens, there are some pretty decent ones in the E Street Band.

A few transition chords carry us right into **Lonesome Day**, even more energetic than on record: as Springsteen repeats the title in the chorus, the higher note of "Day" seemingly lifts him off his feet. In one of the night's rare moments when all three guitars come together, Bruce, Nils and Steve layer the same line (much as on "My Love Will Not Let You Down"), culminating in a quick but intense bottleneck lead from Nils. A real vocal showcase for Patti and Soozie on the "It's alright... yeah!" gospel refrain, and a hands-in-the-air moment for the crowd. Watch for Clarence closing it out oompah-style on baritone sax.

The Fuse, one of the more sonically divergent songs from *The Rising*, has proven a difficult one to bring to the stage. Max recreates the drum machine sound of the album version with the help of some triggers, and Springsteen plays an electric 12-string. But this slow-burner has yet to take off as it could—the mid-tempo rocker has the perfect potential to explode at the end, but it's deliberately held in check. For Nils fans, "The Fuse" also has the potential to be the new "Youngstown," but his lead at the end of this one still seems embryonic.

Darkness on the Edge of Town, a regular at the beginning of the *Rising* tour, is a '99-2000 carryover that brings more of a twist than other returning tour standards. The verses showcase more quiet/loud dynamics in Springsteen's vocal delivery, with Bruce alternating between a hesitating falsetto and belting it out. He takes his guitar lines up a couple of octaves, and a frantic, tremolo guitar lead shows off Bruce's new favorite toy—the reason some have been calling this the Whammy Bar Tour.

The crowd is asked for quiet before the pairing of **Empty Sky** and **You're Missing**, and rewarded with Bruce's beautiful "Across the Border"-style falsetto

SOUND? THE RISING TOUR'S NEW STANDARDS

"EMPTY SKY"
CLEVELAND, OH
AUGUST 14, 2002

JIM LAWHEAD PHOTO

to start. With the same intimate feel as '99-2000's "Mansion on the Hill" and "Factory," "Empty Sky" is performed largely as an acoustic duet between Bruce and Patti. At a warm-up show he told the Asbury Park crowd, "We rehearsed this at the kitchen table this morning." But it's not simply a duet from start to finish, as other band members gradually and subtly add to the mix from darkened corners: Clarence (taking a load off in a chair off to the side) on tambourine, Nils on pedal steel, and Steve on mandolin.

The full band is back for another intimate one, "You're Missing," which begins with Roy on the piano. The main riff is augmented first by Soozie on violin, then by Nils on slide, as the song builds to a climactic organ solo from Danny—all conducted from center stage by a guitarless Bruce.

Waitin' on a Sunny Day is this tour's feel-good audience participation song, starting with an army of acoustic guitars, and Soozie fiddling the main riff. With a classic Big Man solo, a chant-friendly chorus, Springsteen dashing across the ramparts, and "doo doo doo"s from everyone, it's "Hungry Heart" and "Out in the Street" all in one. By way of *Sesame Street.*

The Promised Land, Worlds Apart, and **Badlands** formed a block for most of this U.S. leg, what one *Backstreets* staffer calls "the desert trilogy." Springsteen puts down the guitar and picks up the harp for "The Promised Land," a version very familiar from the last tour down to the gospel "I said yeah!" exhortations. The 2002 shows have been heavy on *Darkness* material so far, but besides being go-to concert warhorses, "Promised Land" and "Badlands" demonstrate a particular thematic tie. They establish a through-line between the struggles and hard-fought victories on *Darkness* and, 24 years later, *The Rising*.

The *Darkness* pair cradles "Worlds Apart" which, though it still needs work and strains to stay too faithful to the studio version, has already come a long way from the mess it was in Jersey. An exotic prelude before the song kicks in—Roy triggering qawwali vocal samples as Clarence cha-chings his finger cymbals, with Springsteen getting all trancy—has become more succinct as the tour has gone along. Other varied instrumentation (Nils on banjo, Danny on accordion) keeps the song from being a straightforward rocker, but rock it does. As Bruce and Steve trade solo licks at the end—with Steve's songs-of-the-humpback-whale guitar sound coming from another place entirely—it truly feels like two worlds coming together.

After the L.A. show, reader Karl Birthistle wrote: "'Worlds Apart' is the core of the show, the fulcrum around which it all pivots. This is the E Street Band at its best. As the waves of music wash over us, there is depth, pathos, joy excitement, liberation, loss, and fulfillment... it is about life. This is as good as it gets."

Mary's Place is being pulled in two different directions. One is the wild and innocent rave-up you'd expect from the studio version, a "house party" that invites some call-and-response shouts from the crowd. But at one point, Springsteen hushes the crowd and sings in a gentle falsetto at center stage: "I've been missin' you... all night long.... I've had some long and lonely nights...." It feels like a truer, blue-er take on the song is inside the labored elation, waiting to get out.

For the most part, the song maintains its "Tenth Avenue" role, with the band introductions crowbarred in: "You can't have a house party without a house band!" And "the greatest little house band in the land" is introduced in familiar fashion, though Bruce came up with a few new jokes. Max is the product of "a *ménage à trois* between Keith Moon, [jazz drummer] Buddy Rich, and Ed McMahon." Here's Steve, "the coolest little DJ in the U.S.A., up from the Underground... a man comfortable anywhere in the world in his pajamas...." And cringe as you might, Patti is also known as "natural Viagara... come on up for the rising!"

The "house party" concept brought a one-off stage rap to New Jersey, a half-baked story for opening night about Bruce's dance-contest winning cousins, and the mysterious difference between the age of 12 and the age of 16. But Springsteen seemed to think better of the storytelling even before he finished the first one, and it hasn't turned up since.

While the video of **Countin' on a Miracle** played after the shows displays a different take on this song, the rock version in concert is faithful to the album. Every show, even these shorter ones, seems to need a beer/bathroom break song—this mid-tempo rocker seems to be it. Watch the traffic in the aisles. A slot other than its current post-"Mary's Place" position might help "Countin' on a Miracle," and the pacing of the show in general.

Closing the main set is **Into the Fire**. Tinkering has continued with this one, and though the Big Man's bagpipes were left somewhere in the swamps of Jersey, the intro varied over the course of this leg, from Soozie's rustic fiddle solo to an ethereal lead-in from Patti. In any case, when the full band kicks in, it's one of the most powerful sounds you'll hear all night. It's still a surprising choice for set-closer—at the Meadowlands opener, quite a few people took a break during this song, only to come back and find the band leaving the stage. But along with "The Rising," "Into the Fire" serves to bookend the set with the two most explicitly 9/11-related songs, and the two most inspirational at that.

In the encores, **Dancing in the Dark** retro-fits Bruce's "big smash" from 1984 with a fiddled riff and chugging rock guitars. Debuted in Tacoma with a gleeful knowingness, the number-two hit sounds reborn, filtered through Bruce's new rock voice, and is perhaps the biggest surprise of the tour. Simultaneously pleasing casual concertgoers looking for hits and serious fans waiting for just this kind of kick added to the show, "Dancing in the Dark" blasts off the encore to where it needed to be. Come on baby, come on baby, come on baby....

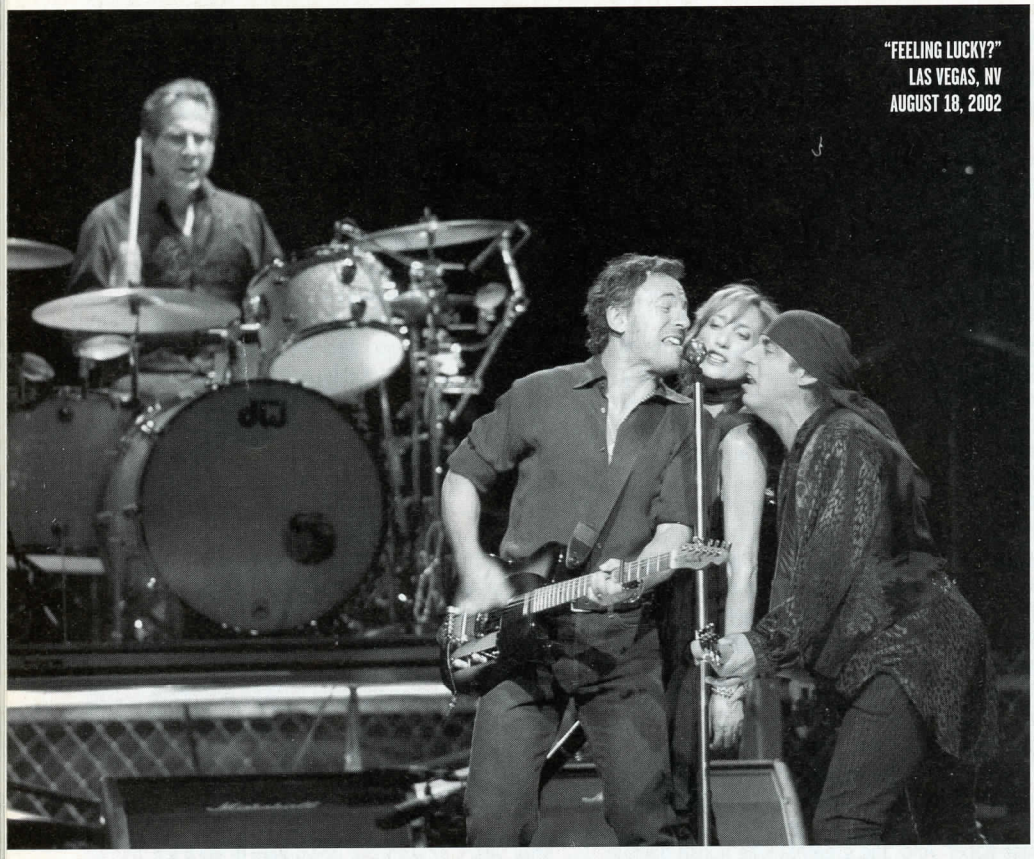
The fourth live arrangement of **My City of Ruins** since Springsteen debuted it less than two years ago shows the song is strong enough to take whatever Springsteen throws at it. Similar to the holiday shows, Bruce starts this one alone at the piano; he also takes the time here to plug local food banks, encouraging concertgoers to give. As he moves from the piano over to center stage, there's an expanded showcase for solos from Danny, Clarence, and Soozie, all in a row. This one is powerful every night.

After years of stripping down **Born in the U.S.A.** to make its real message heard—from the *Joad* tour, to the *Nebraska*-era demo on *Tracks,* to the bottleneck slide version from '99-2000—Springsteen brings the full power of the E Street Band back to the song. Bruce tried this once on the last tour, but this time it works, partly because, other than stretching "Born" into two syllables, he stays truer to the original vocal. And Nils gets his wish [see "Guitar Man," *Backstreets* #74]—this one'll "rip your face off."

As of the second show of the tour, Springsteen added a few spoken words on civil liberties to preface the song: "If you've been reading the news, we're in the midst of a rollback of our civil rights right now. That often happens in times of emergency. Civil rights are a reaffirmation of our strength as a nation of laws. We don't usually think about these things until they come knockin' on our door, or until it's too late. It's a time right now to keep your heads up and to be very vigilant about what's going on in the civil rights area. That responsibility and vigilance comes with the turf when you're born in the U.S.A." By the end of the leg, Bruce's urging for vigilance expanded to encompass President Bush's talk of war with Iraq.

Land of Hope and Dreams: the new "Rosalita"? Springsteen is fond enough of this one, originally written to bring something new to the 1999-2000 tour, to close the show with it once again. No hopping from Bruce this time, but a "Take Me to the River"-style addition closes out the song, as the E Street Gospel Choir works in a culminating stanza from "People Get Ready": "...There's a train comin'/You don't need a ticket/You just get on board."

BY CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS



"FEELING LUCKY?"
LAS VEGAS, NV
AUGUST 18, 2002

section, those around me included: six people all sitting together in spite of the four-ticket limit because they knew someone who worked at the venue; two girls who didn't know Bruce from Eminem who had tickets because again, Dad worked at the Gund; two people with media credentials; and two women beside me who stumbled on tickets the day of the show, never having seen Bruce, and decided to leave during "Born to Run." So add that up. How many premium seats were being occupied by people who couldn't care less about a Springsteen show? Way too many. These are the reasons, my fellow hardcore fans, when you get into Ticketmaster at 10:03 on sale day, you end up with horrible seats. —*Doug Baker*

AUGUST 15
THE PALACE
AUBURN HILLS, MI

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Jackson Cage."

SETLIST: Same as 8/10, 8/12, and 8/14

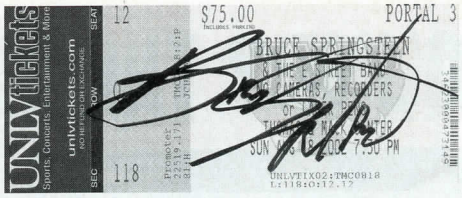
NOTES: While the setlist stays the same for the fourth night in a row, the Motor City does get a bonus: a dash of Motown, as "Mary's Place" incorporates some of "Dancing in the Street."

PRESS: "POST 9-11, SPRINGSTEEN'S REBORN VOICE ROCKS PALACE." Susan Whitall in the *Detroit News*: ...the house party didn't really gear up until "Mary's Place"... Springsteen began by teasingly singing Martha and the Vandellas' Motown party song "Dancing in the Street": "Calling out around the world, are you ready for a brand new beat? Summer's here and the time is right for dancing in the streets ..." He sang it all the way to the "Can't forget the Motor City" line, which prompted the crowd to go predictably nuts—then he segued into "Mary's Place," which was not a letdown.... The best music offers escape in troubled times, but Springsteen has bounced back from a long quiet time and reminded us of a time when music did more, when it could move us to action and give us hope.

A BRAND NEW BEAT: "Worlds Apart" is a powerhouse performance and just gets better every night; Bruce's guitaring at the end is up there with the guitar solo that ends "Prove It" (or "Because the Night" back in '78). "Dancing in the Street" was a great moment, the kind of little detail that the show needs more of. Whether planned or not, it was a nice touch and injected some freshness into an otherwise predictable setlist. It also left me hungering for the "Detroit Medley" in the encores....

—*Magnus Lauglo*

SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE: I never thought I would write this, but I just saw my first disappointing Bruce show. Attending the Detroit concert, I was amazed at the lack of energy and "mail-it-in" approach. Clarence looked like he was downright bored. Everyone else was just going through the pre-arranged, packaged motions of (check the back of our guitars for the name of the town we are in) former E Street zaniness. What used to be spontaneous call-outs for songs is now a Disneyfied Springsteen set list. He might as well have had shows at 1, 4, 7, and 10 in each city. I have been a fan for a quarter century, love the new album, and drove 400 miles to see this show. And I was ripped off. I hope he seriously considers the catalog of music he has to draw from, and the band he plays with. Detroit wasn't worth the time, money or effort. —*Dave Treherne*



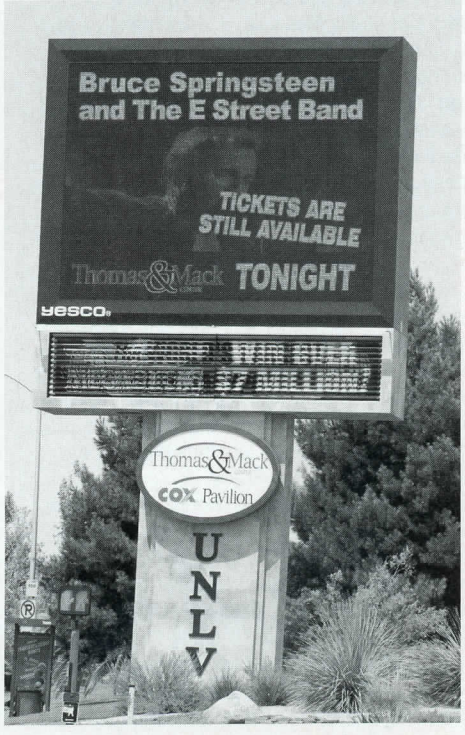
AUGUST 18
THOMAS & MACK CENTER
LAS VEGAS, NV

SETLIST: Adding "Viva Las Vegas" in the first encore, between "Thunder Road" and "Glory Days," distinguishes this setlist from the previous four.

NOTES: The G.A. line found some shade behind the venue, as the heat climbed to 112 degrees. In the crowd: Cindy Crawford, Christina Applegate, Chris Kattan, Juliette Lewis, Robert Downey Jr., Bob Saget, and Jonathan Silverman, many of whom were spotted at the nearby Hard Rock Casino before the show.

FIVE ON THE FLOOR: With the G.A. floor throughout this tour, the MGM Grand had to pass on the show, opening the door to the Thomas & Mack Center which does allow general admission. Nonetheless, there were more than 1,000 open seats in the far reaches of the venue, with G.A. tickets selling for five dollars outside the venue and good reserved seats available at the box office hours before the show.

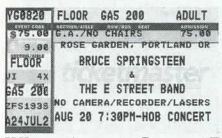
For as many knocks as his sound system gets (and sometimes rightfully so), the sound was superb this evening with a full range and strong vocals. While leading into "Mary's Place" he teased a couple of lines of "Viva Las Vegas," while introducing the Big Man with "Siegfried & Roy's got nothin' on him, baby!" And of course we got a superb performance of "Viva Las Vegas" in its entirety later on. —*Scott Neal*



SCOTT HARRISON PHOTOS

MAKE MY DAY: The Thomas & Mack Center is where the UNLV basketball team plays its home basketball games and is pretty intimate—Jane and I both felt like we were at a high school dance.... Bruce finally addressed the crowd by asking, "Are you feeling lucky? How lucky are you feelin'? You're probably asking yourself did I fire six shots or five...." Coming on the heels of the 30th anniversary of Elvis' death, the Boss's rendition of "Viva Las Vegas" was rockin', poignant but oh so cool. A pair of pink fuzzy dice made its way to the stage from the audience, and the Boss playfully added them to his guitar as he helped evoke the ghost of the King. *—Jim Wallace*

AUGUST 20
ROSE GARDEN
PORTLAND, OR

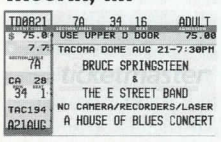


SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Prove It All Night/The Fuse/Atlantic City/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Bobby Jean/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/Backstreets/Into the Fire//Thunder Road/Glory Days/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: The tour premiere of "Atlantic City" replaces "Darkness," and the tour-proper premiere of "Backstreets" stands in for "American Skin."

LAUGH LIKE A MAN: Before "Empty Sky," Bruce said "Hello, Portland... you've got a nice town here... nice little spot... you know I once got married here *[cheers and laughter]*... It was a long, long time ago." He then chuckled and doubled over in laughter, struggling to recover. Still giggling, Bruce looked over at "the first lady of love" and intoned in mock seriousness, "What was I thinking?!" It's great to know that an episode that was once so painful, so publicly humiliating for Bruce, can now be laughed away. *—Tim Thomas*

AUGUST 21
TACOMA DOME
TACOMA, WA

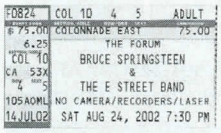


SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Prove It All Night/The Fuse/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Bobby Jean/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/Thunder Road/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: The tour premiere of "Dancing in the Dark," in a high-energy new rock arrangement, followed by the tour-proper debut of "Ramrod" that builds on that energy. Five-dollar tickets were plentiful outside the venue, with no seating behind the stage, and large swaths of the empty upper-level seating draped with plastic tarps. Bruce remembered his bout with the flu in 1984: "I spent a week here one night. I was so sick. But goddammit, it's good to be back anyway!"

START A FIRE: Amazingly, neither the Portland nor Tacoma shows were near capacity, but I think that motivated the band to really push harder, if that's possible. The set changes in Portland enhanced a beautiful performance, and the Tacoma Dome show was in the stratosphere. So much more power, physical movement by Bruce and the Big Man, emotion in Soozie's violin—far and away the best show of the three I've seen on this tour. "Dancing in the Dark" just as a setlist-change is exciting, but it doesn't begin to tell the story of the energy with which he brought back that tune, setting it into *The Rising* context: "I could use just a little help..." *—Bill Charney*

AUGUST 24
THE FORUM
LOS ANGELES, CA



SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Prove It All Night/The Fuse/Atlantic City/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Bobby Jean/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/Thunder Road/American Skin (41 Shots)/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams

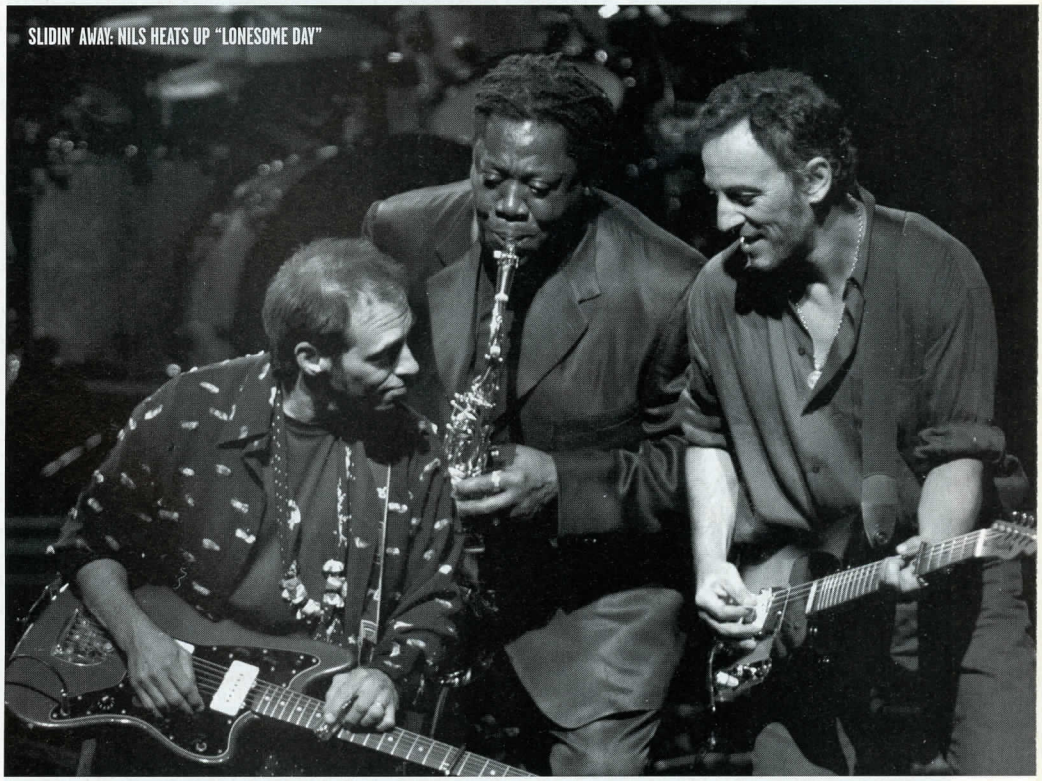
NOTES: The Best of the Northwest, with "Atlantic City" in the main set and "Dancing in the Dark" and "Ramrod" returning in the encores. In the crowd: Hillary Swank, Chad Lowe, Rob Lowe, Billy Baldwin, Melissa Etheridge, Donna Mills, Ray Liotta, Kelly Lynch, Pat Riley, and Alan Thicke.

PRESS: "ROCK, WITH RESPECT." Robert Hilburn in the *Los Angeles Times*: ...Despite a few generic, feel-good exercises, *The Rising* is a bold, courageous album, and the best of Saturday's concert also radiated that spirit. Even though the tour is now a month old, however, the show doesn't have the easy, convincing pace of most Springsteen concerts.

Springsteen worked hard at the Forum, for instance, at making the upbeat new "Mary's Place" fill the cleansing, emotional role that "Rosalita (Come Out Tonight)" once did, but it just didn't quite clear the bar Saturday. His feel-good "Countin' on a Miracle" also felt too generic, especially when he could have used the time for some of the more penetrating tunes from the album, including the intimate, soul-searching "Paradise" or the tortured "Nothing Man."

When Springsteen was on, however, he matched the most chilling and inspiring moments that have characterized his performances since the '70s. His singing remains as gritty, convincing and forceful as ever, the veins in his neck bulging from the opening notes to the end....

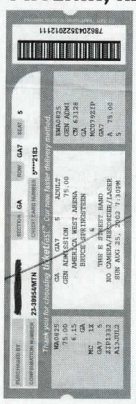
In the end, it was a sometimes rocky but triumphant stand in which Springsteen not only held the audience's attention with a show built around 11 new songs, but also fulfilled his career-long pledge to make every night on stage count. And if you're wondering why he played the Forum rather than return to the more glamorous, upscale Staples Center, where he performed with the E Street Band during their 1999 reunion tour, Springsteen gave the answer. Gazing between songs at the old arena, which is more suited to Springsteen's blue-collar tradition, he said with a smile, "No sky boxes."



SLIDIN' AWAY: NILS HEATS UP "LONESOME DAY"

MARK R. SULLIVAN PHOTO

AUGUST 25
AMERICA WEST
PHOENIX, AZ



SETLIST: Same as Tacoma, 8/21.

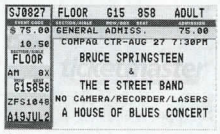
NOTES: On the setlist but not played: "Glory Days," to follow "Dancing in the Dark."

THE JERSEY SIDE: When asking for silence before "Empty Sky," Bruce pauses, looks at some guy in the front who's yelling at him, and says, "That's exactly what mean. I *know* I'm from New Jersey. I don't need to be reminded. My memory hasn't gone that far, not yet!" Then there is silence and the magnificent beauty of "Empty Sky." —*Karl Birthistle*

PHOENIX RISING: As with all Phoenix shows, he took a moment to thank the crowd for years of support and went down memory lane to the shows in the early '70s at the Celebrity Theater. He even pointed to a few people and said, "We were comin' here before you were born." Pretty good crowd—a lot better than Vegas a week ago. The place was full, with the exception of four upper-deck sections behind the stage. The crowd was much more into the show than all the casino-comped pimps in Vegas who left during "My City of Ruins"...

The sound was much better than the show in 1999, which had to have been one of the worst on that tour. The "Dancing in the Dark" addition should become permanent—it really is good with the heavy guitar. The only thing I could have wished for is "Backstreets" thrown in, a la Portland. However, the new songs and the band seem to be peaking. —*Greg Ross*

AUGUST 27
COMPAQ CENTER
SAN JOSE, CA


SJ0827 FLOOR G15 858 ADULT
$ 75.00 GENERAL ADMISS. 75.00
10.50 COMPAQ CTR-AUG 27 7:30PM
FLOOR BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
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615856 THE E STREET BAND
ZFS1648 NO CAMERA/RECORDER/LASERS
A19JUL2 A HOUSE OF BLUES CONCERT

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Prove It All Night/The Fuse/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Bobby Jean/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/American Skin (41 Shots)/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/Ramrod/Born to Run//Thunder Road/My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams

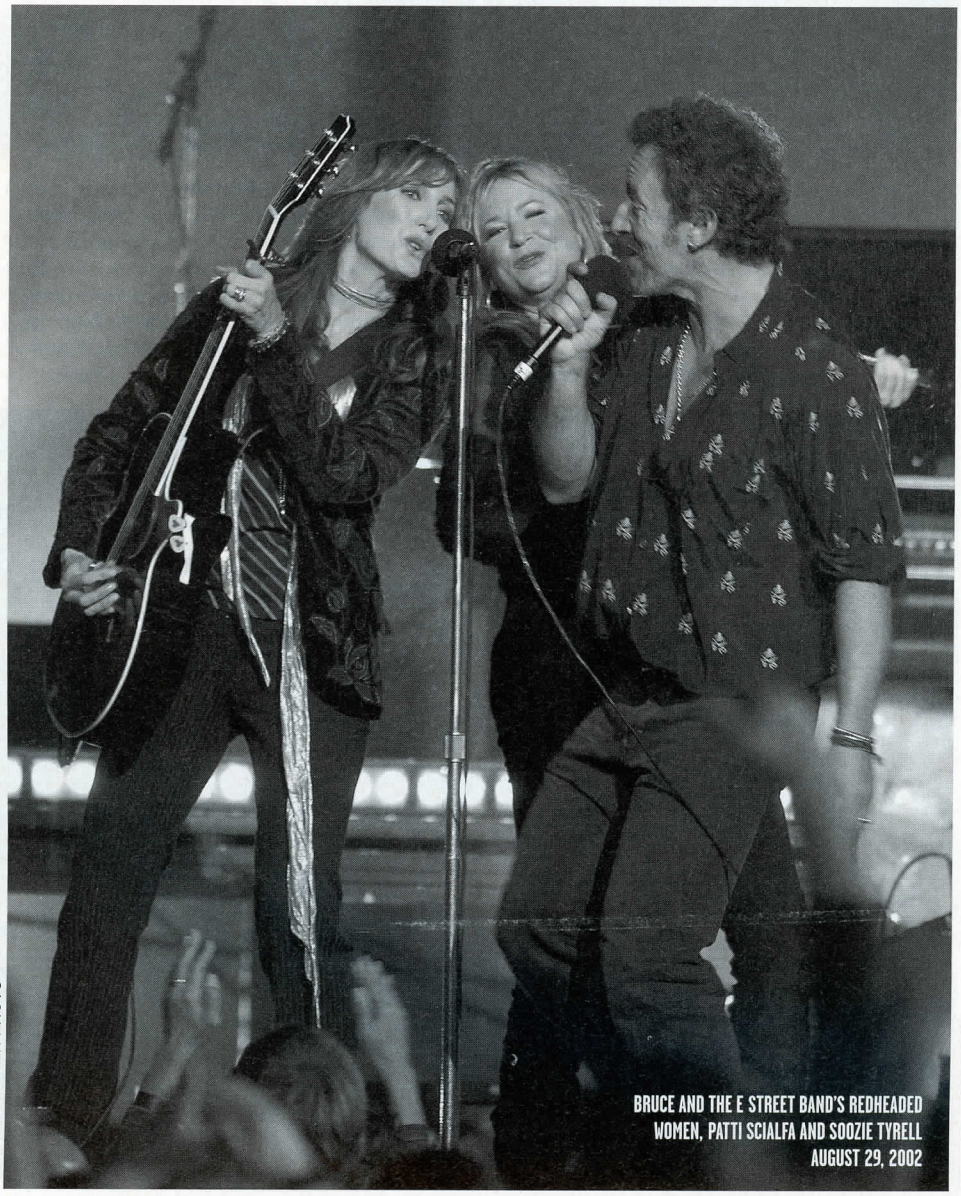
NOTES: The main set returns to its 8/10 configuration, though the first encore distinguishes the show from its initial East Coast run, with the one-two punch of the rocked-up "Dancing in the Dark" and "Ramrod." Bruce still searches for the right place for "Thunder Road"; here it kicks off a four-song second encore. The last performance of "American Skin" on the first U.S. leg.

PRESS: "RISING HIGH." Neva Chonin in the *San Francisco Chronicle:* ...His tour with the E Street Band takes *[The Rising's]* themes into an emotionally charged live environment. The result is a two-and-a-half-hour show that pulls the audience on a journey through despair, euphoria and reflection. Unlike the 1999-2000 E Street Band reunion tour, it isn't always an easy, or fun, ride. To Springsteen's credit, he doesn't mean it to be.

Tuesday's show was shorter and less casual than a classic E Street performance, less a barn-busting party than a narrative intended to inspire and uplift through the cathartic quality of music. And, thanks to some recalculating of the set list, it succeeded. The stiffness and faltering dynamics reported during the tour's opening shows were gone, replaced by a smooth flow between new and old material and dark and light themes....

"SPRINGSTEEN, BORN TO BE THOUGHTFUL, QUIET, TENDER." Brad Kava in the *San Jose Mercury News:* ...Springsteen's biggest skill Tuesday seemed to be arranging, as he layered the songs and recast them for live performance while giving each member of the band a place to shine. He also played guitar, harmonica and piano—and sang with a range that included falsetto—with a virtuosity matched only by Prince in the arena rock world.... This wasn't a night for those seeking escape in their entertainment. But for those who believe that popular music can hit the heights of artistic expression, this one placed the 52-year-old New Jersey native at the top of the heap.

THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT: Bruce's three kids sang a chorus of "Waitin' on a Sunny Day." They were at Patti's side of the stage, and Bruce leaned over to them [with the microphone] where they were sitting on a trunk on the lip of the stage while he laid down to listen. Afterward, both Bruce and Patti were laughing for a good while. —*Stu Levine*



BRUCE AND THE E STREET BAND'S REDHEADED WOMEN, PATTI SCIALFA AND SOOZIE TYRELL
AUGUST 29, 2002

JEFFREY SNYDER PHOTO

AUGUST 29
ROSE CENTER
NEW YORK, NY

SOUNDCHECK: Several run-throughs of "The Rising" in the afternoon.

SETLIST: The Rising/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Mary's Place/Thunder Road/My City of Ruins/Dancing in the Dark/Ramrod/Born to Run

NOTES: Springsteen and the E Street Band opened the MTV Video Music Awards with a

live performance of "The Rising." Introduced by James Gandolfini, Bruce's VMA opening was broadcast from the Rose Center for Earth and Space, the Planetarium at the American Museum of Natural History. MTV President Van Toffler said in advance, "I think [Springsteen's] performance will be a poignant moment. It feels as though his time is now in terms of what the country needs. He finds the beauty in the everyday working man and we'd be remiss if we missed out on that."

Working man that he is, Springsteen kept playing, despite the rain. The MTV cameras took the proceedings to Radio City Music Hall, but fans who remained at the planetarium were treated to half of a typical *Rising* show. Bruce and the band began the evening's hour-and-15-minute performance with two takes of "The Rising"—one to warm up, followed by one for the cameras. While this was not a scheduled tour stop, the surprisingly long set rates as a real stand-out performance of *The Rising* shows to date. In the crowd: Garry Trudeau, museum president Ellen V. Futter, CNN anchor Bill Hemmer, Oz's Chuck Zito.

JEFFREY SNYDER PHOTO

THIS BUS STOPS AT 82ND STREET

THROUGH THE RAIN, SPRINGSTEEN SERENADES NEW YORK CITY ON AUGUST 29

THIS WAS EASILY THE BEST Springsteen concert I've ever seen. The performance of the songs was indescribable. There's no point. It was simply the best versions of each song that I have ever seen.

What made it magical were the intangibles. Most obviously, there was the setting. 81st Street in Manhattan. Small stage. Beautiful backdrop. The comforting snug of the brownstones around the Park. A fine mist that was sweet and sensuous, like it was flown in from a Hollywood set circa 1948. Moreover, it will never happen again. Bruce will play Convention Hall and the Stone Pony again. He most probably will pop into many of the same bars you might have been lucky to see him in before. He will never play virtually on the street in the middle of Manhattan ever again.

Then there was the crowd. These people wanted to be there. Many people hadn't seen Springsteen yet on this tour. One woman drove up from Philadelphia on a prayer. The two strangers I was standing with were both fans who had *The Rising* but hadn't seen any shows recently—one was sitting in Central Park and heard the soundcheck, and one just happened to be sitting in the park in front of the place. Serendipitous situations if I've ever heard of one.

Then there was the set. First, it was shorn of expectations. You didn't know if he was gonna play another song at first. Then you thought it would be cool if he played three or so when you found out he would play a little extra. Then, when it got to "My City of Ruins" and he joyously kept going, well, you didn't know when it was gonna end (or if it was gonna end).

And spontaneity? While there were no surprise songs, there was the palpable sense that there very well might be. And the order of the songs? This wasn't borne out of an artist out of his element in a room mapping a show in his brain. This was a performance artist at the top of his game and going on instinct. No calculation. Just heart.

And to call it a mini-concert? Completely wrong. That suggests that some element was left out. No way. Sadness? You got it. Nostalgia? You got it. Euphoria? You got it? Laughs? You got it. Respectful remembrance? You got it. This wasn't a mini-concert. It was this current show at its best distilled to its essence.

Finally, and for me, the most moving: you didn't need to go to a run-down seaside resort town. You didn't need to go to a barn somewhere in the middle of a field or a cookie-cutter suburb. You didn't need to get into a room somewhere by paying scalpers prices or fighting with Ticketmaster or knowing someone or standing in a drop line.

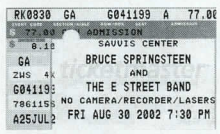
On a cool Thursday night in the soft summer rain, if you happened to be in the greatest city in the world, sitting in a park or walking down the street, with the end of summer approaching and the first anniversary of one of the darkest days in American history looming, you could happen upon the greatest live performer of his generation—and maybe of any generation—doing what he does best, the best that he maybe has ever done it.

That's the spirit of rock 'n' roll. It's immediate. It's accessible. It knows you and it knows what you need, and it has the courage and power to give it to you.

Let it rain, let it rain, let it rain indeed.

—David Billotti

AUGUST 30
SAVVIS CENTER
ST. LOUIS, MO

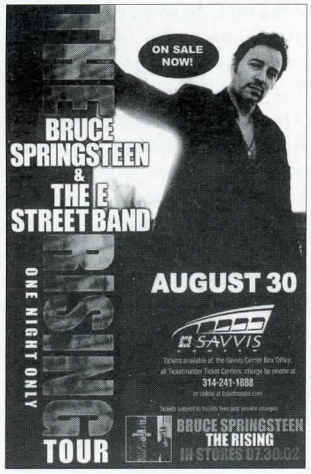


SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Candy's Room."

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Prove It All Night/The Fuse/Downbound Train/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Bobby Jean/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/Thunder Road/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/Glory Days/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: The tour premiere of "Downbound Train," an audible, takes the post-"Fuse" slot. With "Glory Days" back in the encores, that's a total of five songs played from the *Born in the U.S.A.* album. A loud *clunk* from Roy's piano throws the beginning of "Thunder Road" for a loop, causing Bruce to make jokes about exactly what the hell is playing on that radio, and Roy Orbison spinning in his grave. "Candy's Room" was on the setlist but not played. The last performances of "Thunder Road" and "Bobby Jean" on the first U.S. leg.

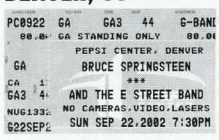
PRESS: "SPRINGSTEEN TREATS SAVVIS CROWD TO HEALTHY BLAST OF AMERICAN ROCK." Kevin Johnson in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch:* The Boss still rules. Never mind if that wasn't totally clear from Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band's concert Friday night at Savvis Center, where seats numbering in the couple of thousands were left empty in the rear and center of the upper level.... Regardless of those who didn't show up, the 12,000-plus in attendance were treated to a two hour-plus blast of American rock 'n' roll served up right on time and just the way they like it. Forget what you heard about this being a more somber or serious show this time around.... Instead, the show overwhelmingly offered the hyped-up and on-its-feet crowd an exhilarating ride that was a celebration of hope and resilience....



GET ON UP: The Savvis Center only 3/4 filled, and it was a very dead crowd—until Bruce told folks to "get off their asses" during "Mary's Place." Afterwards, one of the best crowds I've seen in a long time. *—Dave Gendel*

DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

SEPTEMBER 22
PEPSI CENTER
DENVER, CO



SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Adam Raised a Cain," "Two Hearts," "The Ties That Bind," "I'm a Rocker," and "Stand on It."

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Ties That Bind/The Fuse/Candy's Room/Empty Sky/You're Missing /Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Two Hearts/Mary's Place /Countin' on a Miracle/Racing in the Street/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/I'm a Rocker/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: The night before his 53rd birthday, Springsteen returns after a three week break to set the tone for the rest of the U.S. leg with some real shake-ups in the set. "Thunder Road" and "Bobby Jean" are dropped, and there are four tour premieres: "The Ties That Bind," "Candy's Room," "Racing in the Street," and "I'm a Rocker." Last played in Australia on 4/3/85, "I'm a Rocker" was not on the setlist and was called as an audible. "Two Hearts" is back for the first time since opening night, though in a different position.

PRESS: "SPRINGSTEEN FAITHFUL FIND DELIVERANCE." Mark Harden in the *Denver Post*: ...In many ways, this was a show even more winning than Springsteen's celebratory reunion jaunt with the E Streeters that played two nights at The Can in 2000. There was less of a sense of clearing away the cobwebs and more of getting down to the business of hard, sweaty rocking.

Throughout the two-and-a-half-hour show, Springsteen was wound up tight and belted like a carnival barker. He pointed at the many signs bearing birthday greetings and made frequent jaunts up and down the runways....

"Candy's Room" was floridly dramatic, sparked by one of several Springsteen guitar solos of the evening.... But the night's most evocative moment came late in the main set, a plaintive "Racing in the Street," Springsteen's archetypical tale of cars and dashed hopes, with Bittan providing a piano solo at times worshipful, at times defiant.

As Springsteen has long taught us with his music—and as he reminded us Sunday—there's still a darkness on the edge of town, but tomorrow still brings the dawn.

Happy birthday, Bruce.

SEPTEMBER 24
KEMPER ARENA
KANSAS CITY, MO

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Something in the Night," "Night," "She's the One," and a full-band "Incident on 57th Street."

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Night/The Fuse/Something in the Night/Empty Sky/You're Missing /Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place /Countin' on a Miracle/Incident on 57th Street/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams/Kansas City

NOTES: Five tour premieres, for a total of nine new songs added to the rotation between Denver and Kansas City: "Night," "Something in the Night" (an audible, in place of the setlisted "The Ties That Bind"), "She's the One" (a fitting follow-up to "Badlands" from here on out), a solo-piano "Incident on 57th Street," and Leiber & Stoller's "Kansas City." The last, a city-specific special to end the show, makes this the first of the tour to close with anything other than "Land of Hope and Dreams."

GOIN' TO KANSAS CITY: When Bruce went over to Roy's piano after "Countin'," I couldn't imagine what was coming next. "Incident" was spellbinding—the entire crowd was awestruck and just watching the performance in stunned disbelief.

"Kansas City" was a throw-in at the end—it looked like the band was going to leave the stage after "Land of Hope and Dreams," but they just lingered, and Bruce went back to the mic and said, *"It just has to be done!"* It was a long, wild version—at the part when the song goes "so long, bye bye," Bruce took the entire band off stage except Roy, who banged away on a three- or four-minute piano solo. Then the band "snuck" back on stage, with Jon Landau in tow, and finished the song. Landau was playing electric guitar off to the side and Bruce called him to the center mic to sing a "so long, bye bye," chorus with him—he got into it, too.

Just an amazing show—"Night," "Something in the Night," and "She's the One" already had made it pretty special before the jaw-dropping "Incident" and "Kansas City." —*Jon Greer*

SEPTEMBER 25
UNITED CENTER
CHICAGO, IL

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "My Hometown" with Evanston native Eddie Vedder. Van Zandt later tells *Rolling Stone*, "We're doing a soundcheck, and look who walks in."

BACKSTREETS' DREAM SETLIST

What would you like to hear from Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band when their tour pulls into the United Center on Wednesday?

The staff at Backstreets, the fanzine devoted to all things Boss, did "our best to be reasonable and realistic and come up with a setlist that's in line with what seems to be Springsteen's visions for this tour—in other words, one we could actually imagine him playing. (Though admittedly, there's still not a chance in hell.)"

This, then, is the Backstreets staff's eventual, hard-fought consensus as of 5:12 p.m. EST Sept. 18 but still subject to frequent change.

- "Lonesome Day"
- "Night"
- "Human Touch"
- "The Fuse"
- "Open All Night"
- "Empty Sky"
- "You're Missing"
- "The Price You Pay"
- "Worlds Apart"
- "Badlands"
- "The Rising"
- "Waitin' on a Sunny Day"
- "Living Proof"
- "Born in the U.S.A."
- "Darkness on the Edge of Town"
- "Jungleland"
- "Across the Border"
- "Land of Hope and Dreams"

First encore
- "The E Street Shuffle"
- "Dancing in the Dark"
- "Born to Run"

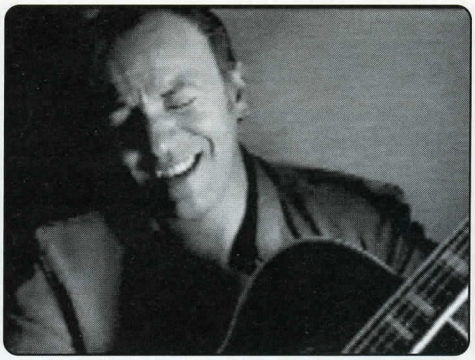
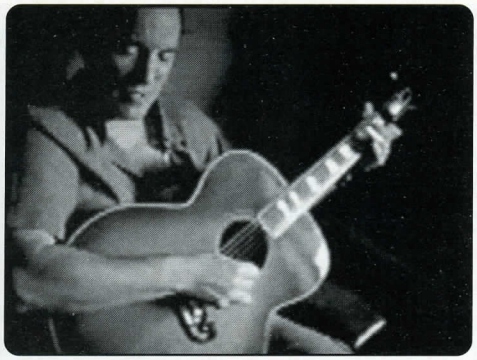
Second encore
- "Real World"
- "My City of Ruins"
- "Further On Up the Road"

IF DREAMS CAME TRUE: Our "dream setlist," as published in the *Chicago Sun-Times* on 9/22. At the very next show, on 9/24 in Kansas City, Bruce followed "Lonesome Day" with "Night."... Coincidence? Oh, probably. But still pretty cool.

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Ties That Bind/The Fuse/Jackson Cage/Empty Sky/You're Missing /Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/For You/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/My Hometown/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: The tour-proper premieres of "Jackson Cage" and "My Hometown," the latter with Vedder as the first special guest of the tour. Another solo-piano slot brings the tour debut of "For You."

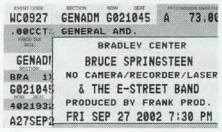
BLOOD ON THE FRETS: The show was in another league from the ones I saw in Cleveland and Auburn Hills. The arc and flow were much more along the line of the reunion tour shows, thanks to the rarities in the main set and the injected energy in the encores. The performance soared with an amazing guitar solo with bloody fingers (!) at the end of "Worlds Apart," going into "Badlands" and then "She's the One"

HOOTENANNY ALL NIGHT LONG: Scenes from the "Countin' on a Miracle" video, a black and white performance film shown on the screens most nights after the concert.

(which absolutely smoked). The "My Hometown" duet with Eddie Vedder was a great surprise. Eddie was so nervous you could see him shaking from my second-row center view. He flubbed the last line or two on his second vocal go-around and Bruce stepped in and bailed him out, but it was a cool performance from the hometown boy. As Eddie left the stage, he profusely thanked Bruce, then made eye contact with the band members and flashed each the peace sign. Bruce and Steven were totally on top of their game in the mugging department during "Ramrod," which included a great dramatic pause building to "Boss time!" As Bruce left the stage for the night, he left us with "My kind of town, Chicago is...." —*Dave Miller*

SEPTEMBER 27 BRADLEY CENTER MILWAUKEE, WI



SOUNDCHECK: Includes the full-band "No Surrender."

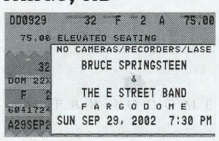
SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/No Surrender/The Fuse/Something in the Night/Empty Sky/You're Missing /Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place /Countin' on a Miracle/Mary, Queen of Arkansas/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams/Little Queenie

NOTES: The tour premieres of "No Surrender," "Mary Queen of Arkansas" (performed solo on harmonica and acoustic guitar), and Chuck Berry's "Little Queenie." After "Land of Hope and Dreams," Springsteen said, "Well, I guess I got a little bit left...." and like "Kansas City" a few days earlier, an extended jam on "Little Queenie" was a local special to close the show. Last played in Philly on 9/21/99, the song remains indelibly linked to the 10/2/75 Milwaukee '75 "bomb scare" show. On the setlist but not played: "Cadillac Ranch," replaced by "Ramrod."

PRESS: "SPRINGSTEEN GETS LOOSE." Greg Kot in *Rolling Stone*: Springsteen and the E Street Band revved up Chuck Berry's "Little Queenie" as a surprise encore in homage to a Milwaukee night in 1975 that none of the E Streeters will ever forget. "There was a bomb scare, so we had to clear out the show for a few hours," guitarist Steve Van Zandt recalls. "We went back onstage at midnight—it was the only time we ever played absolutely drunk. We threw out the setlist, and 'Little Queenie' was the first thing we played. So when we did it the other night in Milwaukee, it was one of those, 'Who would remember this?' moments for us and the fans."

READY TO GROW YOUNG AGAIN: What a thrill to hear a passionate "No Surrender." It fits perfectly in the third slot, and Bruce appeared to dig playing it so much that it's a natural for each show on this tour. A nice moment occurred during "Sunny Day" when Bruce stuck his microphone in front of an eight-year-old girl standing against the stage and she sang the appropriate line without missing a beat. Later in the song, he introduced Clarence as "the only sign of intelligent life in the whole fucking universe" before ending the number with a hell-bent, long knee slide into the Big Man playing his sax. A blistering "Badlands" soared so much after the usual false ending that Bruce hit us with an extra guitar flurry at the end. The show was pushed over the top by a surprise "Little Queenie" in which Bruce changed an early lyric to, "Meanwhile I was thinkin', I'm so damn tired." The show was extremely high-energy like Chicago, but Bruce looked much more sapped at the end of this one—which I think is precisely why he pushed himself even more. It was incredible to witness. —*Dave Miller*

SEPTEMBER 29 FARGODOME FARGO, ND

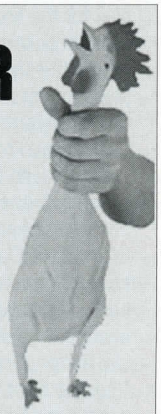


SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Working on the Highway."

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Ties That Bind/The Fuse/Prove It All Night/Night/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place/Working on the Highway/Countin' on a Miracle/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: The tour premiere of "Working on the Highway" is a brand new "hootenanny"-style arrangement, with the band gathered in a circle around Bruce by song's end, featuring Soozie's prominent fiddle, Danny on accordion, Nils on banjo, and Clarence playing the washboard. Not that many saw it—out of the Fargodome's 25,000 seats, only 7,500 were sold.

THE RUBBER CHICKEN INCIDENT



MILWAUKEE WAS FABULOUS. I was in the pit, at the stage near Patti. Before leaving Des Moines for the show, I bought a rubber chicken as an "audience participation" ploy. I had no plans to toss it on stage—tossing anything on stage is rude and dangerous—but I figured if Bruce played a properly goofy song, like "Ramrod," I'd offer it to him. Who can resist a rubber chicken? Sure beats a baseball cap.

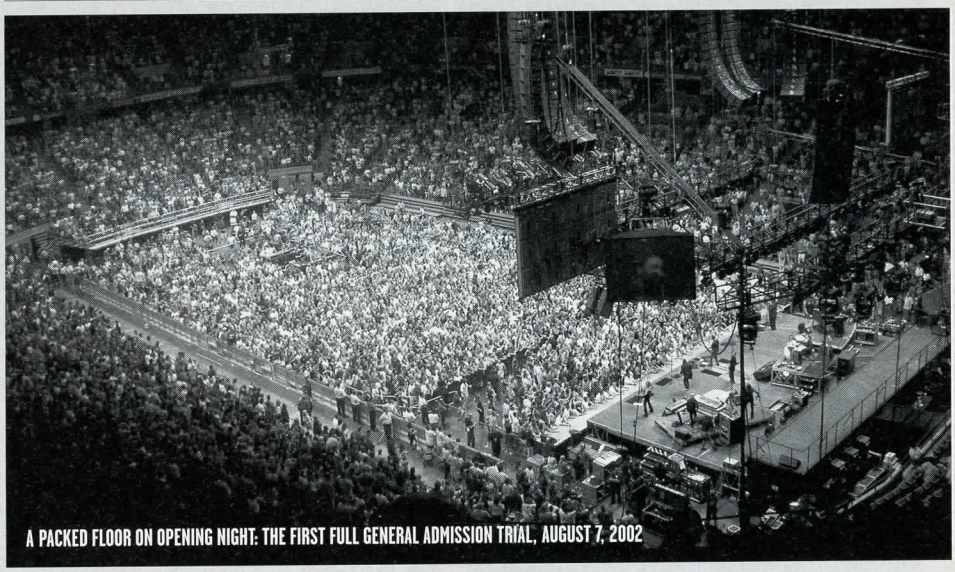
But he never came near me during "Ramrod," so I figured I'd have to haul the thing to Fargo or St. Paul. There was no way I was going to offer up a dumb rubber chicken during "Born in the U.S.A." or "Land of Hope and Dreams." Those are serious songs. But then he played "Little Queenie," left the stage in mid-song and came right over to where I was standing. I thrust the chicken out, feet first. He immediately grabbed it and whipped it under his arm and then, with the rest of the band, took the stage to complete the song. I was laughing my ass off at the sight of that chicken under his arm while he was playing guitar. At the song's close, he yelled, "Anybody lose a rubber chicken?" and tossed it out into the crowd.

The last time I saw it, the chicken was cartwheeling ass-over-teakettle, legs splayed and mouth agape, out into a sea of outstretched hands. Bye-bye, chicken. It took me ages to fold that thing up and conceal it on my person, and then I had to hang around outside the Bradley Center for hours with those hard rubber feet poking me. Couldn't sit down at all. This was no plain rubber chicken, mind you. This was the deluxe "Screaming Chicken" ($9.99 at Spencer's Gifts) with a long, hard plastic device in its neck that made it howl when squeezed. I had to stuff toilet paper down its throat to keep it from howling when I walked. It was worth it, though, just to see Bruce playing guitar with a rubber chicken under his arm.

—*Clark Kauffman*

STAND ON IT

FOR THE RISING TOUR'S GENERAL ADMISSION FLOORPLAN,



A PACKED FLOOR ON OPENING NIGHT: THE FIRST FULL GENERAL ADMISSION TRIAL, AUGUST 7, 2002

IN MID-JULY, WHEN THE DETAILS of Bruce Springsteen's 2002 tour became known, one stood out: all 39 shows in the United States would feature general admission on the floor. Although shows in Europe have been general admission as far back as 1981, almost all shows in North America have exclusively featured reserved seating since the late 1970s. On *The Rising* tour, the entire floor is standing-room-only, first-come, first-served.

For the 1999-2000 U.S. shows, a scalper-foiling plan for the first 17 rows of floor seats was instituted, with tickets to be picked up at will call just before the show. Fans referred to them as "jailbait" seats (under row 18, har har). This time around, one fan referred to the GA plan as "purgatory" seats—you know, always in limbo.

Initially, Jon Landau told the Associated Press' Larry McShane that general admission would add a "looseness and excitement" to the shows. Perhaps U2's recent Elevation tour, which featured a two-tiered GA section on the floor, was the model. The band had a heart-shaped runway that extended about a third of the way into the arena. That did two things. First, it allowed more people to be "right up front," if only for a few songs, when the band moved out to the tip of the heart for a mini-set. Second, it decreased the pressure on the front barrier by limiting the number of people who stood inside the heart.

Similarly, the Springsteen tour has a barrier that bisects the width of the floor, generally placed about a quarter of the way back from the stage. But without the heart or a Rolling Stones-type runway jutting forth, Springsteen and Co. aren't making any forays into the masses. In front of the barrier there is room for about 350 people. The other thousand or so generally admitted folks are left to scrap for second tier status. So how do you get to be one in that very lucky and well-placed minority?

First, you have to want to be there. Once you have a ticket, stamina and perhaps a bit of good fortune are the only other requirements. Most lines for the first dozen shows began forming the night before the concert. Of course, reading material, a sleeping bag, provisions for food and drink and the like are only for outside, and that assumes that the arena allows you to camp in the first place. Madison Square Garden in New York insisted that fans could not line up on Garden property before 5 p.m. the day of the show. Other venues, like Thomas and Mack Center in Las Vegas, welcomed fans, and even directed them to begin lining up in areas that would be shaded from the hot desert sun.

As for how early to arrive to be in "the pit," as the space in front of the barrier is known, that depends on the city. If you're going to Birmingham, you may well score a place in the first 350 at 2 p.m. on the day of the show. In San Jose, fans who arrived by noon were right in the middle of that pack. But in Los Angeles, the pit was gone by dusk the evening before the show. New York and Philadelphia, of course, were similarly full much earlier, a result of Springsteen's huge fan base on the East Coast. Generally, by the afternoon of the show, the line to get into the pit is stretched beyond capacity. That means if you showed up at 2 p.m. and found that yourself to be number 351 in line, then your six-plus-hour wait until showtime was one for a spot behind the barrier.

Doors usually open around 6 p.m. Once inside, the only thing to do is wait until showtime. An unwritten code has emerged, in which fans generally wait in their places for a half-hour or so while the pit fills up. Once things stabilize, people leave for a bathroom break or a snack, their places "reserved" until they return (but don't assume your neighbor will hold your spot forever: in Phoenix, a few fans tried to elbow their way back to the front after being gone for most of the time leading up to the show, and were ejected).

Typically, there is no formal organization for the GA line (which is not the "drop" line, a carryover from previous Springsteen tours, where fans queue in hopes of scoring extra tickets that become available at a venue's box office). But due to the significant efforts of some fans, it hasn't been a chaotic free-for-all. Armed with pen and paper, a few early arrivals simply began writing names on a list that in some cases became officially recognized by venue staff as the rightful order of those seeking entrance in front of the barrier. From this list, an occasional "roll call" would be read at different hours, on some occasions around midnight, but usually by 6 a.m. You could typically miss one roll call, but after that, your place was forfeited.

The fan system has not been without its share of problems. Since the list remains "unofficial," representatives of the venue are under no obligation to participate in this system. They usually go along with it, because it is easier than not doing so—though touch-and-go moments have not been uncommon, when someone from the venue has said that they have no interest in the line, the numbers or the list. In at least one city a security person tried to extort money from the people in line. Some fans have reported instances of rival lines forming or being overtaken, and charges of space-holding are not uncommon. One pit-frequenter told *Backstreets* of "rampant corruption": "I played the game within the framework that has been set up by the fans, and let me tell you, it is not pleasant. I'm unable to understand why there is no organizational effort to run this thing. In my opinion, leaving it up to the fans and the arenas is an incredible act of irresponsibility. The fans that have anointed themselves the guardians of the general admission throng are not always acting in the best interests of everyone in line."

Any such "corruption," rampant or not, would only compound the problems with the current GA policy, reducing even further a casual fan's chances of getting a fair shot at a good position. Considering the general lack of lower-level reserved seats when tickets go on sale (a frustrating issue in itself, especially given their subsequent availability through price-gouging online agencies), that becomes a real issue. Even some pit regulars have been troubled by a system that enables the same people to be up front at every show. With no publicized or clearly spelled-out rules, repeat customers and hardcore fans do have a distinct advantage. "Take a fan in Buffalo, where the show was on a weekday," writes one concerned reader. "He may only get to the one show in his own city. But when he shows up at the end of a working day he finds hundreds of people from all over the country have spent the day on line at his city's local arena to be up front at the only show he's attending. Not only that, but due to the 'secret society' that the GA line has become, some of the folks at the front of the line were actually watching the encores in Philadelphia when the Buffalo line was forming. The fact that those Philly fans could even purchase tickets to Buffalo while this guy in Buffalo was not allowed to try for Philly tickets only adds to the injustice."

Some have wished for a lottery to determine line position, or suggested that GA tickets be numbered and a random number selected to begin the line. "Excitement and looseness, order and fairness, new fans and old fans side by side—seems like they're all possible under the right circumstances," says a frustrated fan. "No system is perfect, but why not try to fix the glaring problems? It's

PAUL KAYTES PHOTOS

EVERYBODY FORMS A LINE. HOW TO AVOID THE G.A. BLUES

hard for me to believe that someone in the Springsteen camp hasn't stepped up, taken a look, and said, 'We can do better.'" But until there is a change in policy, bringing order and fairness to the GA line has remained largely the fans' responsibility. Neither Springsteen's management nor road crew has formally recognized any of the fan efforts made to make the GA line a smooth experience. Perhaps this is the "looseness" to which Landau is referring. They do, according to reports, monitor the line in each city, and at least one representative has told a line-organizer that he should be contacted immediately if any problems arise.

Venue cooperation, when it has occurred, has gone a long way toward helping provide structure for the process. In Las Vegas, arena staff made a difference by issuing wristbands to the first 350 people by 2 p.m. (Typically, pit-goers get two wristbands: one that allows them on the floor, and a second that identifies them as having access to the pit.) This helped the crowd relax, knowing that a key step in the process would be complete well before it was time to go in. The San Jose concert was a rare instance where the venue ran the line in full, issuing numbered wristbands, and strictly enforcing the order of the line when it was time to go in. To the satisfaction of fans who had waited all day in the heat, one venue representative even marched a line-breaker back to the end of the line, yelling as she went that this particular person was out of order.

Safety remains a top concern. Despite numerous general admission tours by countless bands in arenas of all sizes over the years, the fact that Springsteen was making a switch garnered a fair amount of press. Many recall the Who's tragic 1979 concert in Cincinnati, which was preceded by a mad rush to get in that killed 11 fans. Springsteen's tour stop at Cincinnati's U.S. Bank Arena this November will be the first GA show by a major artist in that city since that awful day. But the concert industry has changed, and these days safety, though it can never be guaranteed, seems to be at the forefront instead of an afterthought. (It helps that Springsteen's audience is a lot older, and there is very little use of alcohol or drugs in the GA line.)

Apart from the unruliness of a few in Phoenix, there have been no reports of violence or injuries thus far on the tour. The only surge towards the front is when Springsteen decides to get up close and personal, to slap hands or rip a guitar solo. Still, it's hard to imagine this brief jostling being any more dangerous than the stage rush on previous tours. And GA in America is a far less taxing experience than in Europe. "You need to be strong in there," said one fan of the floor at shows in his native Spain. "That's not my definition of 'enjoying a show.' People won't be polite, they'll push you and crush you until they get 'their place' in the front."

So, given all this, which is better—reserved or GA? That depends on an individual's stamina, amount of free time, and, yes, height. If you don't like crowds or you lack for patience, stick to reserved. If perfect sound quality is your thing, being too close probably is not. What about behind the barrier? There is plenty of room despite the numbers, and generally the very back of the floor is not crowded at all. The closer one gets to the barrier, the more crowded it becomes. And of course, the later you arrive at the venue, the greater the distance to the stage. One fan, who cops to having been staunchly against the idea of general admission shows, now swears by it. "GA or bust. You do lose a little in the sound quality up front, but being close allows you to see things you would miss if you were farther back... little interactions." But of course, those little interactions are mostly lost to anyone not in the front half of the floor. On the plus side, the more space you put between yourself and those in front of you, the better sightlines you'll find. Just don't expect to see Bruce winking at Steve after a solo.

In general, fans with GA tickets who aren't concerned about the pit should allow for an arrival at least one hour before the time printed on the ticket. That should be sufficient to get in, get acclimated, and get ready.

"THE PIT": AUBURN HILLS, AUGUST 15, 2002

SEPTEMBER 30
XCEL ENERGY CENTER
ST. PAUL, MN

SOUNDCHECK: Includes several run-throughs of "Nothing Man," and the never-publicly-performed "Restless Nights."

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/No Surrender/Prove It All Night/Further On (Up the Road)/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place/Nothing Man/Countin' on a Miracle/Racing in the Street/Into the Fire/Dancing in the Dark/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams/Working on the Highway

NOTES: An extra dose of *The Rising*, with the tour premiere of "Further On (Up the Road" (in place of "The Fuse") and the world premiere of "Nothing Man" (an audible) making for 12 songs from the new album. "Incident" was on the setlist as an alternate for "Racing in the Street." An attendance record is set at the Xcel Energy Center, packing in over 19,000.

SCENE OF THE CRIME: This was Bruce's first return to the hallowed ground where he danced with Courtney Cox more than 18 years ago (the XCel Energy Center was built on the spot formerly occupied by the St. Paul Civic Center). "Ramrod" featured the line "Look over yonder, see the(m) Twin Cities lights." "Racing in the Street" was dedicated to Colleen Sheehy and the staff of the Weisman, with Bruce saying, "I'm already in every bar in America, and now I'm in a museum! —*Josh Jacobson*

FURTHER ON: It was a perfect end to the Upper Midwest portion of this barnstorming tour. Bruce was in great spirits, the crowd was lively and respectful, the weather was warm and sunny for the GA line, and the sound in the new arena was first rate. Many truly inspiring moments, starting with an amazing opening sequence through "Further On (Up the Road)." The crowd was not to be denied from that point on, and yet managed to heed Bruce's call for quiet. After "Mary's Place," Bruce abruptly changed acoustic guitars, the band ran around (a sure sign of a change), and gentle strumming on his acoustic guitar lead into the tour premiere of "Nothing Man." In an arrangement similar to the album version, this performance accentuates the gospel tones of the vocals that have become the new signature of the E Street Band.

Bruce clearly appreciated the packed and enthusiastic house, as he didn't wait long before launching into "Working on the Highway" following "Land of Hope and Dreams." "Working" has its share of critics, but it would be hard to find fault with this fun new country-style rave-up arrangement.

It would also be hard to imagine this tour going on without Patti, as it did for a few shows in 1999 (including Fargo and Milwaukee). Patti's become an indispensable part of the show, and she seems to be enjoying herself on stage much more than at any time during the reunion tour. And the E Street Band just keeps getting better—they worked hard on "Restless Nights" during soundcheck, so you know more surprises are coming! —*Yoji Shimizu*

STEVE MARLIN PHOTO

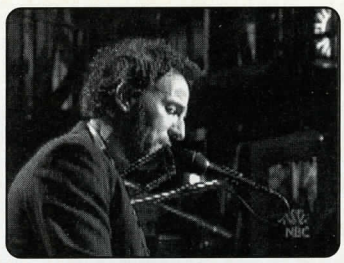
HOMETOWN BOY PETER WOLF WITH BRUCE IN BOSTON, OCTOBER 4, 2002

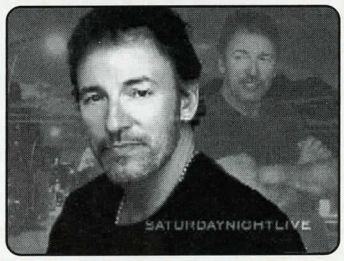
OCTOBER 4
FLEET CENTER
BOSTON, MA

SOUNDCHECK: Steve leads the way in a lengthy work-up of "Dirty Water."

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/No Surrender/The Fuse/Prove It All Night/Candy's Room/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/My Hometown/For You (solo piano)/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/Ramrod/Working on the Highway/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams/Dirty Water

NOTES: After an afternoon solo performance of "Thunder Road," to dedicate the Zakim Bridge [see sidebar], Springsteen hits the FleetCenter for the longest show of the tour to date, passing the three-hour mark with 26 songs. Diversions from the handwritten setlist: "Candy's Room," "For You" on piano, and an extra song ("Working on the Highway") in the first encore. To close, Bruce called out regular Beantown guest Peter Wolf for a cover of "Dirty Water," a song near and dear to every Bostonian's heart, previously played by Bruce only in part (in "Light of Day," 8/21/99).





LOVE THAT DIRTY WATER: Why does it seem like Bruce and the band always hit their stride in Boston? By the show's second number, you could tell there was something cooking with Bruce. Maybe he was still moved by the Leonard P. Zakim Bridge dedication ceremony earlier in the day—it was clear this show was gonna be different. "No Surrender" had everyone singing along, and after "The Fuse" Bruce took control and brought anyone left sitting to their feet with "Prove It All Night" followed by "Candy's Room."

Bruce dedicated "My Hometown" to Lenny Zakim and his family. He prefaced the song by saying manager Jon Landau had brought Lenny to a previous concert years back and told Bruce: "Here's a guy who lives the life you sing about in your songs." A touching moment, and Bruce basically let the crowd carry the chorus of "your hometown" for the entire song.

As he does on every trip back to Boston, Bruce remembered his roots—seated alone at the piano for "For You," he mentioned playing at Paul's Mall, Charlie's, and Joe's Place. Part of what makes these shows so special is the fact that Bruce really never did forget, and takes his older fans along with him.

After the beautiful "Land of Hope and Dreams," Bruce said, "we can't leave without bringing out a local boy." As he's done since the 1992 tour, out bopped Peter Wolf, for the surprise bonus encore performance of the Standells' "Dirty Water," a local garage rock classic from the '60s. What brought the house down though, was when the song appeared to be over and the band members left the stage playing, leaving Max still keeping the beat. The lights went dark, and the crowd continued the chorus of "love that dirty water" for several minutes until Bruce, the band, and Peter Wolf returned to the stage to finish the show, and the evening. *—Bill Curtis*

UNDER THE BRIDGE

Springsteen honors Lenny Zakim at bridge dedication in Boston, October 4

IN A LIGHT DRIZZLE UNDER cloudy skies, Bruce Springsteen lifted the spirits of those on hand at the October 4 dedication of the Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill bridge. Springsteen was in Boston for a show that night at the Fleet Center. Introduced by the late civil and human rights activist Lenny Zakim's three children, Springsteen lightened up the day by joking, "This is a much bigger bridge than I had expected. If I had known I would have brought the band."

Springsteen told the crowd that Jon Landau introduced him to Zakim, saying, "'There's a guy on the front lines doing the things that you sing about.' And I knew him a little bit in the last year of his life. He was a guy whose intensity and inner spirit you could feel even though he was very ill. We honor his memory by continuing on with his fight for social justice."

Zakim, who died of cancer three years ago at the young age of 46, worked for two decades as director of the Anti-Defamation League of New England, bringing as much passion to his endeavors as Springsteen brings to his music. Zakim formed "A World of Difference," the ADL's anti-prejudice program. He also established "Team Harmony," a project aimed at teaching young people tolerance. And just before he died, Zakim set up the Lenny Fund, a source of funding for struggling social programs. Springsteen performed a highly emotional, solo-acoustic version of "Thunder Road" at the bridge dedication that moved Zakim's widow Joyce to tears. The song was a favorite of Zakim's, so much so that it was played at his funeral.

Before performing "Thunder Road," Springsteen told the gathering of about 2000 people (from dignitaries to construction workers on the ten lane cable bridge), about seeing a picture of Lenny with the Pope.

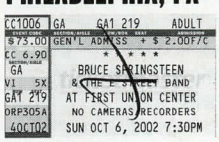
"He showed me the picture and said, 'Look, look, look!' and I realized he was wearing a baseball hat that said *Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band* on it. So my hat has been in the presence of the Pope, thanks to Lenny."

"So I thought that was pretty cool."

At the end of "Thunder Road," Springsteen said, "We love you and miss you, Lenny."

—John J. Kelly

OCTOBER 6
FIRST UNION CENTER
PHILADELPHIA, PA

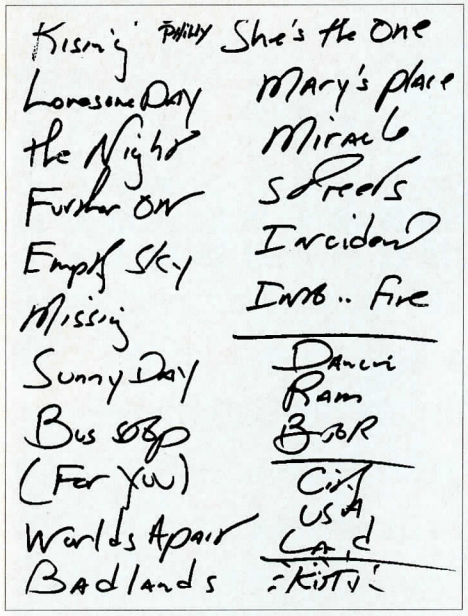


SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Paradise."

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Night/Further On (Up the Road)/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street?/For You/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/Streets of Philadelphia/Incident on 57th Street/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams/Kitty's Back

NOTES: After playing the season premiere of *Saturday Night Live* on October 5 (performing "Lonesome Day" full-band and debuting a solo-piano "You're Missing" over the airwaves), Springsteen and the band wrapped up a busy Boss weekend on a Sunday night in Philly. Includes the tour premieres of "Does This Bus Stop," "Streets of Philadelphia," and "Kitty's Back" to close the show. "Does This Bus Stop" and "For You" were performed with the full band, while "Streets of Philadelphia" and "Incident" both featured Springsteen at the piano. "The Promised Land" dropped out of the set for the first time on the tour proper. In the crowd: Tim Robbins and Susan Sarandon.

TEMPORARY INSANITY: One of the weirdest things I've ever seen at a Bruce show, before "Empty Sky": Bruce mentioned that they had a bunch of surprises worked up for the crowd, and there was a huge cheer. Then he said that they were going to need a little quiet for the next two songs. The lights went out, and Bruce walked up to the mic and started strumming his



guitar, looking down, while Patti was putting her hands up to the mic like she was getting ready to sing.

Bruce kept strumming the guitar in the dark, like he was looking for something. After about 15 seconds, he said, "I can't remember it," and everyone started hooting and hollering. Patti ran over. So did Steve and Nils, and they all talked for two or three uncomfortable minutes.

I sat in between two Bruce virgins, and one turned to me and asked, "Has this ever happened before?" I think it was just like the Michigan tour opener in 1980—he walked up to the mic and completely blanked.

Afterwards he laughed, "God, it's not like I haven't done that song a lot lately," and "We're all allowed a little temporary insanity. I guess the Alzheimer's is kicking in." Then he said, "It must have been that LSD I did before the show (big laugh from the crowd). I didn't do it all those years and now I know why. But it made my black shirt look green!" I didn't know what he meant, but later when he took the vest off, you could see his green shirt had all kinds of intricate embroidery and it really sparkled. It definitely had his "look," but it could just have easily belonged to Justin Timberlake.

Biggest "Holy Shit" moments: "She's the One," the solo-piano "Incident on 57th Street," and "Streets of Philadelphia"—just the fact that we got to see three songs with Bruce playing the piano (including "My City of Ruins") was a first for me. And the last song of the night, "Kitty's Back" (last played with the E Street Band in '78 at the Capitol Theatre in Passaic, NJ, although he did play it at the Christmas shows the last couple of years). There was a very cool moment during "Kitty's Back" where Bruce had his back to the audience and Steve, Nils, Garry and Clarence were all in a circle, all jamming watching each other's hands very intently. Most overrated moments: "Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street" and "For You."

At the early East Coast shows, the album Bruce featured almost as much as *The Rising* was *Darkness on the Edge of Town*. In Philly he only did one song off of it: "Badlands." No "Prove It," no "Darkness," "Promised Land," "Candy's Room"... nada. Overall, this was not as focused as the DC/NY shows. Much more of a... a... *Philly show:* all over the place, very high energy, and a great, great night. —*Bob Zimmerman*

OCTOBER 7
HSBC ARENA
BUFFALO, NY

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Let's Be Friends."

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Further On (Up the Road)/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/You Can Look/No Surrender/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/Tougher Than the Rest/Lost in the Flood/Into the Fire//Dancing in the Dark/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Land of Hope and Dreams/Working on the Highway

NOTES: The initial U.S. leg wraps up with three tour premieres: "You Can Look (But You Better Not Touch)," "Tougher Than the Rest" (the first *Tunnel of Love* song of the tour), and a solo-piano "Lost in the Flood."

LOST IN THE KEYS: The show started a bit lethargically, with much of the crowd sitting way too much, but it kicked into gear after "Waitin'"/"You Can Look." Introduced with "This is for the old timers," "Lost in the Flood" was great in theory, but other songs are obviously better suited for piano. —*Emmett Williams*

LAST OF THE LEG: This blew the previous show I saw in Detroit away. The setlist was much tighter, and the new songs are tweaked at this point versus the fifth show of the tour. The band, and especially Bruce's voice, sounded incredible. It now seems he's really comfortable with the way he has chosen to sing the new songs, and it sure shows. The surprises were plenty—"Lost in the Flood," "No Surrender," "You Can Look," and especially "Tougher Than the Rest" were all jaw-droppers. Add to that the dropping of the prolonged intro to "Worlds Apart," and you had a perfect co-mingling of old and new material. This version of "Dancing in the Dark" has been long overdue, I'm glad he's finally comfortable with this much-maligned song—it adds so much to the show. Now if we could only pry "Tunnel" out of him!

He also seemed a bit extra jacked for the show because it was the last U.S. date for a month or so. It was like he didn't want to leave. I knew he had pulled out songs like "Working on the Highway" and "Kitty's Back" as extra closing numbers after "Land of Hope and Dreams," but when I saw him motion to the band to return to their places after the bows, and he grabbed his acoustic, I still had to shake myself.

Being from Buffalo, I've been to everything here, in Detroit, and Toronto for the past 22 years, back to the *River* tour, and I can honestly say this show ranks in the top two or three I've seen. The eclectic setlist combined with superior atmosphere and spot-on playing was unsurpassed. —*Leonard Previte*

FURTHER ON UP THE ROAD

After the October 7 Buffalo show, the *Rising* tour headed overseas for seven European dates, to return to U.S. stages in November. Bruce and the E Street Band have 18 additional U.S. concerts currently scheduled to finish out the year. The tour will continue into next year, with a trip to Australia in development now for early 2002, and more shows in Europe and the U.S. planned as well. Watch www.backstreets.com for breaking news as additional dates are added to the itinerary. The remainder of the 2002 schedule:

Oct 14	Paris, France	Bercy
Oct 16	Barcelona, Spain	Palau Sant Jordi
Oct 18	Bologna, Italy	Palamalaguti
Oct 20	Berlin, Germany	Velodrom
Oct 22	Rotterdam, Neth.	Ahoy
Oct 24	Stockholm, Sweden	The Globe
Oct 27	London, England	Wembley Arena
Nov 3	Dallas, TX	American Airlines Center
Nov 4	Houston, TX	Compaq Center
Nov 6	Austin, TX	Frank Erwin Center
Nov 9	Columbus, OH	Schottenstein Center
Nov 10	Indianapolis, IN	Conseco Fieldhouse
Nov 12	Cincinnati, OH	U.S. Bank Arena
Nov 14	Lexington, KY	Rupp Arena
Nov 16	Greensboro, NC	Greensboro Coliseum
Nov 19	Birmingham, AL	BJCC
Nov 21	Orlando, FL	TD Waterhouse
Nov 23	Miami, FL	American Airlines Arena
Nov 24	Tampa, FL	Ice Palace
Dec 2	Atlanta, GA	Philips Arena
Dec 4	Pittsburgh, PA	Mellon Arena
Dec 5	Toronto, ON	Air-Canada Center
Dec 8	Charlotte, NC	Charlotte Coliseum
Dec 9	Columbia, SC	USC Arena
Dec 13	Albany, NY	Pepsi Arena

Coverage will continue in the next issue with these remaining 2002 dates. In covering each show of the tour, the help we receive from readers is essential. If you'd like to contribute, send concert reports, ticket stub scans, photos, ads, etc., to editor@backstreets.com, or mail to *Backstreets*, PO Box 11079, Washington DC 20008.

SPECIAL THANKS TO: Peter Abraham, Jimmy Baron, Bruce Behrens, Marianne Beyer, David Billotti, Timothy Birch, Dave Bernstein, Tom Berry, Karl Birthistle, Howard Bloom, Tony Boardman, Ron Bostwick, Eric J. Brunman, Charlton Bulkin, Mike Cannon, Anthony Castrovince, John Corrigan, Eric Coulson, Bill Curtis, John Duda, Shelly Edberg, David Fang, Nancy Fields, Dave Gendel, Stan Goldstein, Gary Graff, Jon Greer, Stacy Grogan, Sam Hagler, Gary Hartl, Mario Herrmann, Carol Jude, Gary Kahn, Daniel Kasprzak, Tyson Kautsch, Kevin Kelly, Evan Kern, Anna Kirkpatrick, Ron Koffler, Linda Krecko, John Kwak, John Lammers, Steve Lee, Stu Levine, Joe Lewin, Thomas Mann, Kevin Marshall, Bill Martin, Dave Miller, John Moriarty, Phil Muollo, Scott Neal, Mark Nichol, Bobby Nicol, Matthew Ostroff, Jon Poklop, Ron Prichard, David Rakowiecki, Chris Reed, Gary Rubin, Terri Schell, Chris Schoemann, Eric Schumacher-Rasmussen, Kath Spellman, Bob Steele, Art Stoumbelis, Michael Taylor, Tim Thomas, Vicky Torrey, James Turano, Jon Van, Tom Verga, Jim Wallace, Darryl Wallin, Kelly Walters, Kal Zucker, and everyone else who helped out this time around.

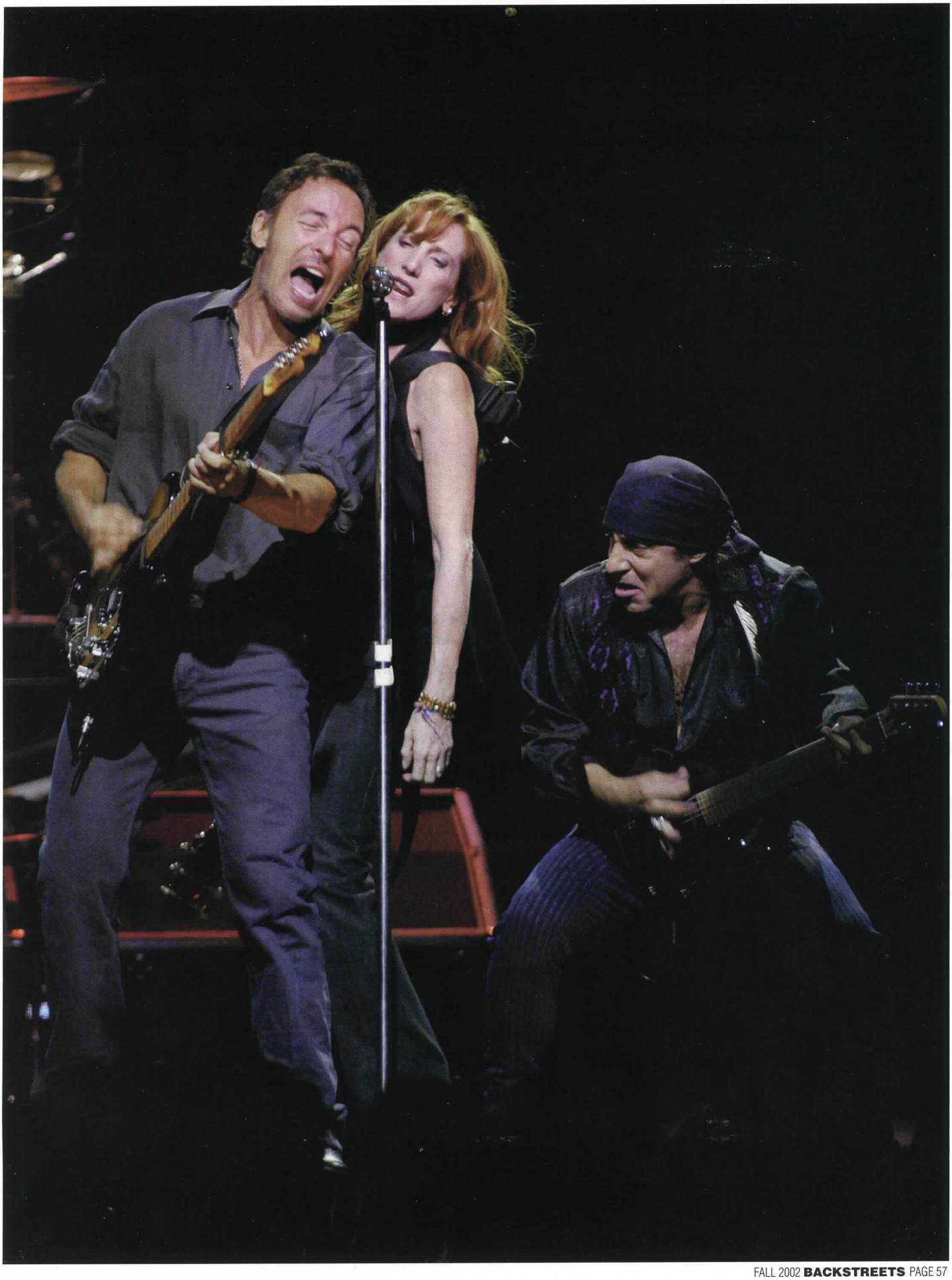
THE RISING TOUR

FIRST U.S. LEG

2002

	JULY			AUGUST															SEPTEMBER							OCTOBER		
	Asbury Park	Asbury Park	Asbury Park	Asbury Park	E. Rutherford	E. Rutherford	Washington	New York	Cleveland	Auburn Hills	Las Vegas	Portland	Tacoma	Los Angeles	Phoenix	San Jose	New York	St. Louis	Denver	Kansas City	Chicago	Milwaukee	Fargo	St. Paul	Boston	Philadelphia	Buffalo
	NJ 25	NJ 26	NJ 30	NJ 2	NJ 5	NJ 7	DC 10	NY 12	OH 14	MI 15	NV 18	OR 20	WA 21	CA 24	AZ 25	CA 27	NY 29	MO 30	CO 22	MO 24	IL 25	WI 27	ND 29	MN 30	MA 4	PA 6	NY 7
THE RISING	1	1/23	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
LONESOME DAY	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
COVER ME			3																								
JACKSON CAGE				3																	5						
PROVE IT ALL NIGHT		3			3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3		3					5	4	5		
THE TIES THAT BIND																			3		3		3				
NIGHT																				3			6			3	
NO SURRENDER																						3		3	3		9
THE FUSE	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4		4	4	4	4	4	4		4		
DARKNESS	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5		5		5	5	4										3
ATLANTIC CITY												5		5													
DOWNBOUND TRAIN																		5									
CANDY'S ROOM																			5						6		
SOMETHING IN THE NIGHT																				5		5					
FURTHER ON (UP THE ROAD)																								5		4	4
EMPTY SKY	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6		6	6	6	6	6	7	6	7	5	5
YOU'RE MISSING	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7		7	7	7	7	7	8	7	8	6	6
WAITIN' ON A SUNNY DAY	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	3	8	8	8	8	8	9	8	9	7	7
THE PROMISED LAND	8	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9		9	9	9	9	9	10	9	10		
DOES THIS BUS STOP																										8	
YOU CAN LOOK																											8
WORLDS APART	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10		10	10	10	10	10	11	10	11	10	10
TWO HEARTS	10	11	11		11	11													12								
BADLANDS				11	12	12	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11		11	11	11	11	11	12	11	12	11	11
BOBBY JEAN							12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12		12									
SHE'S THE ONE																				12	12	12	13	12	13	12	12
MARY'S PLACE	11	12	12	12	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	5	13	13	13	13	13	14	13	14	13	13
TENTH AVENUE FREEZE-OUT		13																									
MY HOMETOWN		14	13	17																	18				16		
PARADISE			14	13																							
NOTHING MAN																								14			
COUNTIN' ON A MIRACLE		15	15	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14		14	14	14	14	14	16	15	15	14	14
AMERICAN SKIN (41 SHOTS)		16	16		15	15	15	15	15	15	15			16		15											
BACKSTREETS				15								15															
RACING IN THE STREET																			15					16			
STREETS OF PHILADELPHIA																										15	
INCIDENT ON 57TH STREET																				15						16	
FOR YOU																					15				17	9	
MARY, QUEEN OF ARKANSAS																						15					
TOUGHER THAN THE REST																											15
LOST IN THE FLOOD																											16
INTO THE FIRE	12	17	17/19	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	17	16	16		16	16	16	16	16	17	17	18	17	17
THUNDER ROAD			20			19	17	17	17	17	17	17	15	15	15	20	6	15									
VIVA LAS VEGAS											18																
GLORY DAYS		19	21			18	18	18	18	18	19	18						18									
DANCING IN THE DARK													17	18	17	17	8	17	17	17	17	17	18	18	19	18	18
I'M A ROCKER																			18								
RAMROD				19	18								18	19	18	18	9		19	18	19	18	19	19	20	19	19
BORN TO RUN		18	23	18	17	17	19	19	19	19	20	19	19	20	19	19	10	19	20	19	20	19	20	20	22	20	20
MY CITY OF RUINS		20	22		19	20	20	20	20	20	21	21	20	21	20	21	7	20	21	20	21	20	21	21	23	21	21
BORN IN THE U.S.A.		21	18		20	21	21	21	21	21	22	22	21	22	21	22		21	22	21	22	21	22	22	24	22	22
LAND OF HOPE AND DREAMS		22	24	20	21	22	22	22	22	22	23	23	22	23	22	23		22	23	22	23	22	23	23	25	23	23
KANSAS CITY																				23							
LITTLE QUEENIE																						23					
WORKING ON THE HIGHWAY																							15	24	21		24
DIRTY WATER																									26		
KITTY'S BACK																										24	

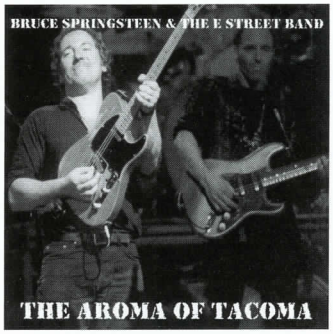
Shaded dates denote performances not on the official tour schedule



MARK R. SULLIVAN PHOTO

ON COLLECTING

By Fred Mills



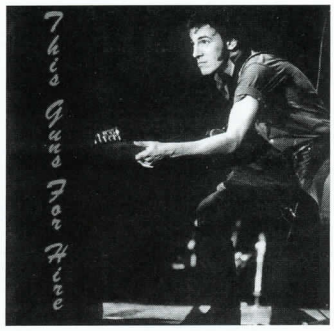
The Aroma of Tacoma
(Anubis 3CDR)
VENUE: Tacoma Dome
CITY: Tacoma, WA
DATE: April 4, 2000
SOUND QUALITY: 9.5
PERFORMANCE: 9
PACKAGING: 9

Anubis is a Euro label that, like Britain's Piggham, specializes in numbered, limited-edition pro-CDRs. How limited? According to the liners, "no more than 99 copies," although that's a little hard to swallow. Regardless, Anubis is quickly notching a rep for high-quality productions, and this release—which was, interestingly, assembled with "the precious help" of Piggham—is no exception. The Tacoma Dome show was a very desirable artifact making the CDR traders' rounds during the reunion tour; presumably an ALD (Assisted Listening Device) recording, or some similar type of "proximity broadcast," it was unique in that it suffered from very few of the typical ALD flaws such as dropouts and interference. Anubis has taken the tape to the next level and cleaned up the sound even further with remastering software, yielding a show that has more all-around presence (in particular, the bass is outstanding) and an even instrumental mix that doesn't allow the vocals to overdominate, as sometimes happens with ALDs. Only a handful of very brief dropout-type glitches are audible as well. You can pull out your well-thumbed *Backstreets* back issues for concert details, but take particular note of the three bonus tracks included at the end of disc three: a three-song soundcheck apparently from the same date. In addition to "My Love Will Not Let You Down" (there's some funny pre-tune vocal harmonizing too), we get run-throughs of "Candy's Room" and "Something in the Night," neither of which was performed during the show itself.

A word about the packaging too. The full-color artwork (one-sided, plus four-panel booklet) is cleanly designed; an additional eight-page booklet reproduces several reviews of the concert, from the *Seattle Times* and the *Post-Intelligencer*. Each disc is in its own cellophane-window sleeve. As per usual Anubis protocol, everything comes packaged in a sealed envelope (no jewe boxes). You've got to slit open the envelope to get the discs, of course, thereby, in theory, "damaging" this incidental packaging. What price, collectors, to access such pristine music?

This Guns For Hire
(Anubis 3CDR)
VENUE: Spectrum
CITY: Philadelphia, PA
DATE: 9-18-84
SOUND QUALITY: 7
PERFORMANCE: 9
PACKAGING: 9

If the title sounds familiar, go to the head of the vinyl-collecting class: this is a pro-CDR edition of a classic 5-LP set that originally came out on the Paladin label (Paladin Records #1959). Anubis, in conjunction with Piggham, offers this as part of its "Vinyl Plus Series," dedicated to restoring "the best boots from the Golden Era" via "state



of the art software"—and, no doubt, with a little help from a still-pristine album set.

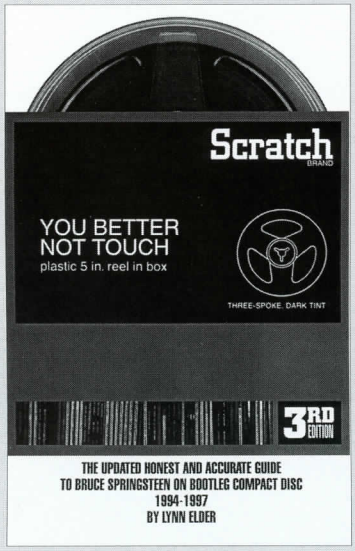
The *Born in the U.S.A.* arena show finds the E Streeters in rare form—Bruce even treats the Philly crowd to a very early Christmas gift in the form of "Santa Claus is Coming to Town." Key highlights include a killer "Point Blank" followed quickly by "I Fought the Law" and "Badlands," an emotional "Jersey Girl" synched to "Rosalita," and one of the more erotic readings ever of "Candy's Room." As side ten of the original album was taken up by a 26-minute MTV interview segment, conducted by veejay himbo Mark Goodman (who, mercifully, remains mostly inaudible), that's included too as the final track on disc three. (Listen for the quick soundclip from the old *Paladin* TV show theme music just before the interview.)

Soundwise, it's not perfect, with fluctuating high-end and a general midrangey sound; the quality deteriorates somewhat towards the end (possibly due to the original taper having to keep jockeying for position within the obviously gone-nuts crowd). Despite what the new liner notes say, it's clearly not "one of the best-sounding boots" of the era; there are plenty of better '84 shows available on disc. But Anubis should be commended for resurrecting a slice of bootleg history just the same. The original black-and-white artwork has been skillfully reproduced as well, right down to the Paladin label's signature logo. And as with the *Aroma of Tacoma*, Anubis title reviewed above, the set is numbered/limited and housed in a sealed envelope.

Backstreets does not endorse the illegal sale of bootleg recordings, nor can we advise as to their legality or how they may be obtained.

YOU BETTER NOT TOUCH VOL. 3

The Honest and Accurate Guide to Bruce Springsteen on Bootleg Compact Disc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BY LYNN ELDER

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- **Each listing also includes date and location of show; tape source; a comparison of the sound vs. tapes in circulation, and more.**
- **Overall star ratings of 1-5 for each disc. An appendix in Volume 3 lists titles from all three volumes according to their star ranking.**
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BACKSTREET RECORDS

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Unless you've been under a rock since mid-summer, you know by now that Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band are currently on tour in support of *The Rising*, Springsteen's first album in blah blah blah. For many fans, it's been a treat to see them play when they come to town; for others, it's a time of traveling and reuniting with friends from all over the world. But for some fans, it's a time to get the CDR burners going strong again.

The first recording of the new tour to circulate widely was the July 30 rehearsal show, the full-length afternoon show following Bruce's *Today* show appearance. A recording was quickly converted from DAT to disc and, with the assistance of a high-speed burner, was soon turning up in mail boxes throughout the world. The sound quality of the recording qualifies as outstanding, with relatively little crowd noise (the show did take place in Convention Hall in Asbury Park, after all, with only hard-core fans in attendance).

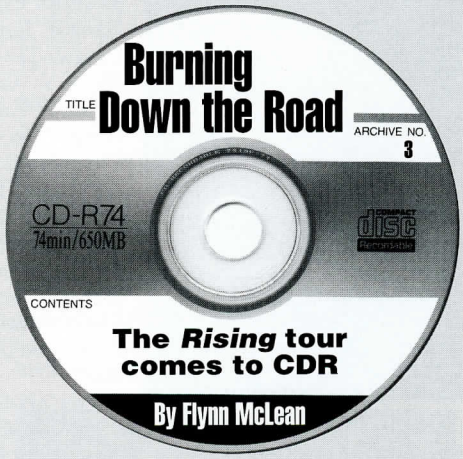
The set list did not disappoint, with 12 songs from the new album (including one, "Paradise," that hasn't made a return to the set during the tour proper) as well as "Cover Me" for the first time since the 1992 tour. However, the show was a rehearsal, and Bruce and the Band were still working out a few kinks. It will be interesting to see if the Crystal Cat release of this show improves upon the sound quality significantly.

Every show from the first leg of the tour has circulated already, some in great sound quality, some in average, and others in the barely listenable category. An excellent recording from the "official" tour opener on August 7 surfaced relatively quickly, but several other versions circulated beforehand. A very clear but bass-less recording of the second show in Washington, D.C., also made the rounds. Unfortunately, an excellent recording of the show from Madison Square Garden has yet to surface; Crystal Cat was reportedly readying one for release, so hopefully that will fill the void. Other good recordings from the first leg so far include Cleveland, Detroit, and Portland.

The recording that quickly became the "must have" of the young tour, however, was the one from the August 21 show in Tacoma, WA. It might not be the best audience recording of all time (the two Stockholm '99 shows released by Crystal Cat probably have that honor), but it certainly must rank in the top ten, with very little audience noise and excellent instrument separation. The show also featured the first "rock" performance of "Dancing in the Dark" in 14 years, and the intensity of the song shines through on the recording.

A quick note regarding etiquette in terms of trying to find recent recordings. It is considered customary to wait at least two weeks after a show has taken place before posting any "ISO" ("in search of") messages on the various e-forums. This allows the taper(s) time to get home, convert the recording to their computer, and do any "post-production work" (such as equalizing).

One interesting aspect of the current tour is that there seems to be at least five tapers doing their thing at each show. While that's good, in that there are back-ups should one taper get caught or another have equipment problems, it can make tracking down the best possible recording somewhat difficult. Some tapers have started to include equipment information along with copies of the recording; such equipment information can include the model of the DAT or Mini-Disc recorder, the type of microphones used, and any kind of pre-amp or processor. Including such information is definitely a step in the right direction to make sure the best-sounding recordings are easy to find.



If the 1999-2000 tour marked the birth of CDR trading, then the current tour is when CDR trading grew up, as fans have become more technically aware of what can be done in terms of getting the music to other fans. The primary development has been the widespread use of Shorten (SHN) files, which are not audio files in the strictest sense, but instead are data files that are exact copies of the original audio file.

Because SHN files are smaller than the original audio files, they have been perfect for sharing among online users as they ensure no loss in sound quality in the conversion. MP3s, on the other hand, lose a significant amount of unrecoverable data in the compression process. While MP3s are great for quickly sharing songs, the CDR trading community frowns upon the practice of converting MP3s back to full audio files and burned to CDR.

A major advantage of SHN files is that they can be posted to alt.binary newsgroups on the internet. Alt.binary newsgroups are different from regular newsgroups, such as rec.music.artists.sprigsteen, in that instead of hosting message boards and discussions, they host actual data files which can be downloaded by anyone with access to the newsgroup and the appropriate software. For more information on accessing alt.binary newsgroups and the necessary software, check out the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) for the alt.binary.gdead newsgroup at http://gdeadfaq.dyndns.org.

Lest we think that fans are only interested in the new stuff, several non-2002 recordings have made the rounds as well. First off, an ALD recording of the second Hartford 2000 show finally surfaced, and while the recording is only through "Light of Day," the wait was certainly worth it. Finally, fans could hear "Roulette" in all its thunderous glory. "Darlington County" with the verse of "Honky Tonk Women" doesn't sound so bad either, although it had circulated in mid-2001.

Another interesting set to emerge has been *Live in NYC Volume 3*, another compilation of ALD/audience mixes from the 1999-2000 tour. *Volume 3* comes on the heels of *Volume 2*, which was distributed by tree in the fall of 2001 in an effort to raise funds for September 11 relief organizations. *Volume 1*, of course, was the official release.

Going further back in the old closet, several high quality recordings from the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour have recently circulated. First, a show from January 7, 1985, from Indianapolis, IN, was recently treed—the previously uncirculated recording is definitely among the better ones from the early 1985 leg, and it could even rank up there with some of the 1984 recordings.

There is also a great recording of the June 1, 1985, show, the first night of the 1985 European tour, from Slane Castle. One would think it would have been difficult to get a good recording in such a setting, but somebody pulled it off. This show is notable as the only show at which Bruce performed the Beach Boys' "When I Grow Up to Be a Man." There is also a great recording of the closing night of the tour, October 2, 1985, from Los Angeles, which was treed under the title *It's Too Late to Stop Now (We're Going Home)*, on RMAS and other e-forums two years ago. This "15th Anniversary" release used a different source recording than the *Grand Finale* set released in the early '90s, making that bootleg release obsolete.

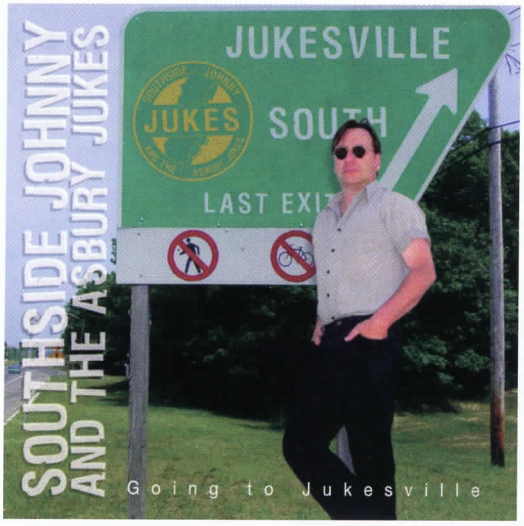
Other notable recordings from 1985 that have recently surfaced include the July 7 show from Leeds, in amazing sound quality, and a June 30 recording from Paris that sounds like the taper was practically in the speaker. For many years, it seemed like there were very few quality recordings from the stadium portion of the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour, and now there is a plethora of ones to choose from.

As the *Rising* tour continues—with dates announced through the end of this year, and a whole new round of shows in the planning stages for 2003—Springsteen fans will have a lot to listen to before they realize it. Hopefully, it won't take another 15 years for these tapes to surface.

Southside's Soul Crusade

Destination Jukesville

By Mike Saunders



In the late winter and early spring of 2002, one of New Jersey's homegrown musical heroes recorded a new album with his famous band. It was quickly mixed, mastered and released in the summer to much acclaim. It's a familiar story, but I'm not talking about *The Rising* here. I'm referring instead to *Going to Jukesville*, the brand new album by Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes. Reflecting the various soul styles Southside loved when he was growing up, this 55-minute, back-to-basics collection features an exhilarating blend of Southside's patented world-weary, whiskey-seasoned lead vocals, swirling Hammond organ, a series of memorable hooks, persistent riffs, infectious rhythms and more horns than Manhattan at rush hour.

"Man the barricades! Batten down the hatches! Call your lawyer or better yet, stuff yer ears with cotton! The new Jukes CD is actually, really, like, totally finished!" joked Southside on his official website. "That low moaning sound you hear is music fans the world over sobbing in relief with the knowledge that their long, lonely wait is finally over. A real honest-to-Betsy *Jukes* record. With horns on every Goddam song. Horns, horns and more horns. Fresh from slaving over a steaming 24-track Studer recording device, I'm here to tell ya, this new hunk-o-plastic is about as Jukified as it can get without it being confiscated by the authorities."

Work on *Jukesville* commenced at Jon Bon Jovi's home studio in New Jersey in late February and was completed at The Loft in Bronxville, NY. Produced by Southside and long-time collaborator Matt Noble, the album was officially launched on June 29 at the band's concert at Trump Marina in Atlantic City. *Jukesville* features the current band line-up (Bobby Bandiera, guitar; Louie Appel, drums; Muddy Shews, bass; Jeff Kazee, keyboards; La Bamba, trombone; Mark Pender, trumpet; Chris Anderson, trumpet; Joey Stann, tenor sax; and Ed Manion, baritone sax) plus guest backing vocalists Lisa Lowell and Soozie Tyrell, who (together with Patti Scialfa) originally sang with the Jukes during the *Love is a Sacrifice* period in 1980-81.

"The finished recording hearkens back to the classic Juke sound. Lots of horns. Soul music-driven rock and roll," said keyboard player Jeff Kazee, adding: "Mr. Lyon's distinctive rasp figures in a bit as well. Johnny, Bobby Bandiera and myself all chipped in a few tunes, rounded out with a couple uncovered covers." In fact, Southside wrote or co-wrote eight of the album's 14 songs, including the bouncy opener "Passion Street," the driving "Baby Don't Lie," the bittersweet "I Won't Sing," and the humorous "I Can't Dance," which namechecks Garry Tallent, the Upstage Club, Archie Bell and the Drells, the Cadillacs, the Vibrations, the Temptations and "all the -ations!"

While probably best known for belting out raucous R&B tunes, Southside is equally at home performing emotional ballads. There are several powerful examples on *Jukesville*, from Scottish songwriter Frankie Miller's "Gladly Go Blind," Goffin and King's "No Easy Way Down," and Alejandro Escovedo's "Tired Skin," to Jeff Kazee's "Lost" and Southside's own "I Will Be Strong," which features one of the finest vocal performances you'll hear this year.

The Jukes are currently on the road and will remain there for the foreseeable future, performing the new material for audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. Having spent the spring and summer touring Florida, the Midwest, and the East Coast, the band traveled to Colorado, Arizona and California for a series of concerts in September. A 15-date UK tour is booked for the following month and selected dates on the European mainland are currently being penciled in for November, including the band's first appearances in Scandinavia in nine years.

Between Jukes gigs, Southside, Bobby Bandiera and Jeff Kazee have been promoting *Jukesville* with a series of radio interviews and live acoustic sessions. On August 17, they appeared on longtime admirer Vin Scelsa's "Idiots Delight" show on WFUV-FM. Scelsa, who played nine songs from the album on his July 6 show, described it as: "A very solid collection of songs. A spirited performance by John and the band. There's a lightness in John's voice, a smile, a sense of humor twinkling throughout. This album ranks right up there with his best work."

In this post-9/11 world, we all need a little musical healing. On *The Rising*, Bruce provides it by exploring life in the aftermath of tragedy and passing on a message of hope in an album which raises the spirits and often reveals gospel influences. On *Jukesville*, Southside has compiled an uplifting collection of songs about love lost and found, rooted in traditional soul styles, which will simultaneously move your heart and make you want to punch the air in triumph.

Although both albums are fine recordings by artists at the top of their game, they have very different commercial destinies. It's inevitable that *The Rising* (album and tour) will cast a long shadow over *Jukesville* and Southside's related activities, so it's important that the latter album gets a fair hearing. While Bruce receives maximum publicity from the Sony machine, these days Southside largely relies on the internet and word-of-mouth to promote his music. He'd probably be the first to say that he doesn't need the hassle, but in a perfect world, *Jukesville* would occupy premium billboard space from coast to coast and be available in all good record stores.

It's too early to say where *Jukesville* will eventually fit in the big picture. It's arguably the most confident and consistent album that Southside has made without the production and songwriting assistance of Little Steven. Given the highly positive reaction it has received so far, it looks certain to occupy a prominent position in a future all-time Jukes Top Five. *Jukesville* has an irresistible freshness and vitality, a spontaneous feel (complete with false starts and outbursts of laughter), a sense of humor (how many songs do you know that include the word "prestidigitation"?), and many fine performances, both collective and individual, that demand and deserve your attention.

And did I mention those horns?

For concert announcements, regular news updates and other Jukes-related information, visit the official website: www.southsidejohnny.org.

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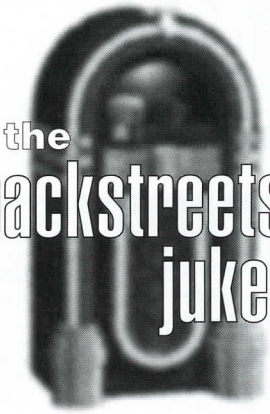
Signature

#75 - FALL 2002



the backstreets jukebox

1. Bruce Springsteen
The Rising
Columbia (CD)

2. The Flaming Lips
Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots
Warner Bros. (CD)

3. Drive-by Truckers
Southern Rock Opera
Lost Highway (CD)

4. Sleater-Kinney
One Beat
Kill Rock Stars (CD)

5. Spoon
Kill the Moonlight
Merge (CD)

6. Beck
Sea Change
Interscope (CD)

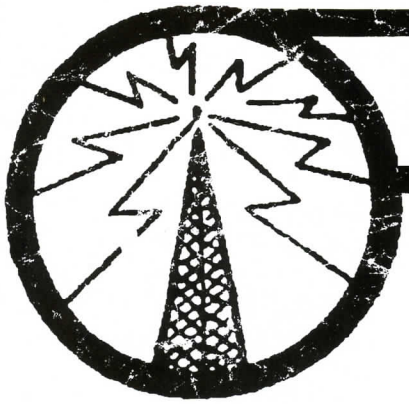
7. Brad Mehldau
Largo
Warner Bros. (CD)

8. Jurassic 5
Power in Numbers
Interscope (CD)

9. Grant-Lee Phillips
Mobilize
Zoe (CD)

10. Mooney Suzuki
Electric Sweat
Gammon (CD)

10 Monster Discs to Play Today and Everyday



Deliver Me From Nowhere

Shut Out the Light

With good reason, plenty of reviewers have noted *The Rising* is not a chronicle of September 11. In fact, two months before the album came out, Springsteen himself took pains to unleash the album from specifics, telling the Associated Press, "The songs I wrote sort of occur in that context"—that is, the songs are informed by, but not strictly about, the horrible event. That's one of the album's strengths, and what saved it from the insipidness of Neil Young's story of that day, "Let's Roll."

And yet, it's also worth noting some of the subtle ways in which *The Rising* has specific roots in 9/11. They reveal for us just how deftly Springsteen channels particular experience into universal emotion.

Take "You're Missing." The song courses with what must be recognizable pain for anyone who's lost a partner. Every day is marked by a void where the loved one should be. But Springsteen didn't call the song, "You're Gone," or "You've Passed," or something to that effect. "You're Missing" has a special poignancy in the shadow of September 11. The loved one in this song, like a thousand other souls in the World Trade Center rubble, isn't necessarily dead—only missing (as if "only" can be used here). She might come home, she might not. Her remains may come back or they may not. You can hear the incredible weight of that uncertainty in the singer's voice, particularly when he sighs that he's got "too many phone calls." Having to explain death to a child, who can't distinguish between the momentary and the permanent, is hard enough; imagine having to explain this incredible uncertainty (and then having to explain the likely death weeks later).

Still, the song isn't about being lost in that rubble. It's simply about not being there, and how relentlessly painful that absence is. And that feeling is universal.

A couple weeks after 9/11, *Time* magazine ran a story on tending emotional wounds that focused on people who'd had passionate encounters with strangers in the days since the attacks. "Apocalypse sex" was the term for it suggested by one man who'd taken part. To my mind, that's the specific situation from that time that underlies the general yearning for physical closeness in "The Fuse."

"The Fuse" isn't a typical Springsteen piece. Instead of narrative, we get images: weddings, funerals, bad moons rising. The only clear picture is the passionate meeting in the last verse: "A quiet afternoon, an empty house/ On the edge of the bed you slip off your blouse/ The room is burning with the noon sun/ Your bittersweet taste on my tongue." It's hard to tell much beyond the actual coupling here. Is the rendezvous happening during the funeral? Why is the house empty?

But after the first two verses and bridge, what is sure about it is this afternoon encounter is taking place amid chaos. Amid too many funerals. Amid too many bad moons. Like the folks in the *Time* story, these characters are mitigating their pain with passion. Again, from the specific comes the universal. Who hasn't tried to mitigate pain at some point?

Intriguingly, "The Fuse" makes use of a familiar Springsteen phrase in the chorus lyric, "Shut out the lights." Springsteen fans are well-versed in figures that turn up repeatedly in his work, particularly symbols (the highway, the river), names (Mary, Johnny), locations (Jersey, the borders), and phrases ("the promised land," "the highway is alive tonight").

"Shut Out the Light," of course, is also the title of the B-side to "Born in the U.S.A.," later released on *Tracks*. In that song, a veteran comes home from Vietnam consumed by what he's seen in the war. At night in bed, he prays for safety from darkness: "Throw your arms around me in the cold, dark night / Hey now, mama, don't shut out the light." It's as if, left alone in the big black, Johnson Leneir would himself be swallowed up.

The pair in "The Fuse" are also seeking shelter, but they're running to, not from, the darkness: "The fuse is burning / Shut out the lights / ...Come on let me do you right." Though it's an inverse plea from that of Johnson Leneir's, their desire is equally understandable. In "Shut Out the Light," the character is terrified of being alone. In "The Fuse," the lovers are barricading themselves from the outside. After all, what did the world offer after 9/11? Funerals. Never-ending digs at Ground Zero. The interminable media coverage. Only in the darkness can they find their refuge.

Understanding pieces of *The Rising* within specific contexts of 9/11, like "apocalypse sex" or the painful question marks carried by relatives of the missing, doesn't lessen the work as a whole by tying it to a singular moment. Rather, it underscores Springsteen's command as a writer. Like the rest of us, he experienced that particular day and its aftermath. He then sifted through sheets of experience and lifted out core feelings. He tapped into not just a single trauma, but how we experience and hopefully transcend trauma. And that's what makes *The Rising* greater than the chronicle of one horrific day.

By Chris Nelson

OFF THE WALL